

Johns Hopkins University

**IMPLEMENTATION OF A SHARED SERVICES MODEL WITHIN RESEARCH  
ADMINISTRATION: A HYBRID RESEARCH DELIVERY MODEL OF PRE- AND  
POST-AWARD ADMINISTRATION**

by  
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## **Abstract**

As budgets have tightened and regulatory requirements have grown more complex, universities are increasingly evaluating new service delivery models to help manage costs and improve overall service and compliance. A shared service model is a scalable approach to faculty service delivery that is readily adaptable to changes in research volume and ensures consistent and effective research administration support across units. This Capstone Project analyzed and discussed how the implementation of a shared services model, such as the Elevate Initiative, within research administration can ultimately result in a refined faculty service delivery model that permits colleges and universities to support full-time research administrators to maintain their dedicated staff while establishing a pool of qualified resources to serve the colleges and universities with limited to no personnel.

This Capstone Project examines the design and implementation process for a new service delivery model that was developed at Baylor University, called University Research Administrators (URAs). Under the Baylor University model, the URAs provide cradle-to-grave support for researchers across the entirety of the grants lifecycle and was rolled out concurrently with the new Oracle Cloud HCM and Finance platforms. This integrated support from both a personnel and system perspective highlights how strategically designed service delivery models can facilitate the seamless management of research administration through rapidly evolving times, including the recent shift to remote work as result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

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## **Abbreviations**

<b>AVPR</b>	Assistant Vice Provost for Research
<b>BU</b>	Baylor University
<b>D/PU</b>	Doctoral/Professional Universities
<b>EAB</b>	Education Advisory Board
<b>ECS</b>	Engineering and Computer Science
<b>ERA</b>	Enterprise Research Administration
<b>FDP</b>	Federal Demonstration Partnership
<b>FRA</b>	Financial Research Administration
<b>FTE</b>	Full-time Equivalent
<b>FY</b>	Fiscal Year
<b>HERD</b>	Higher Education Research and Development
<b>JDs</b>	Job Descriptions
<b>KPIs</b>	Key Performance Indicators
<b>NCURA</b>	National Council of University Research Administrators
<b>OGC</b>	Office of General Counsel
<b>OSP</b>	Office of Sponsored Programs
<b>OVPR</b>	Office of the Vice Provost for Research
<b>PI</b>	Principal Investigator
<b>R&amp;D</b>	Research and Development
<b>R1</b>	Doctoral Universities—Very high research activity
<b>R2</b>	Doctoral Universities—High research activity
<b>R&amp;R</b>	Roles and Responsibilities

<b>S&amp;E</b>	Science and Engineering
<b>SLA</b>	Service Level Agreement
<b>SOPs</b>	Standard Operating Procedures
<b>TJU</b>	Thomas Jefferson University
<b>VPR</b>	Vice Provost of Research
<b>URA</b>	University Research Administrator

## Glossary

**Carnegie Classification.** Starting in 1970, the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education developed a classification of colleges and universities to support its program of research and policy analysis. Derived from empirical data on colleges and universities, the Carnegie Classification was originally published in 1973 and subsequently updated in 1976, 1987, 1994, 2000, 2005, 2010, 2015, and 2018 to reflect changes among colleges and universities. This framework has been widely used in the study of higher education, both as a way to represent and control for institutional differences and also in the design of research studies to ensure adequate representation of sampled institutions, students, or faculty.<sup>1</sup>

**HERD.** The Higher Education Research and Development Survey is the primary source of information on R&D expenditures at U.S. colleges and universities. The survey collects information on R&D expenditures by field of research and source of funds and gathers information on types of research, expenses, and headcounts of R&D personnel. The survey is an annual census of institutions that expended at least \$150,000 in separately accounted for R&D in the fiscal year.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Carnegie Classifications, “The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education ®,” accessed October 4, 2020, <https://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/index.php>.

<sup>2</sup> National Science Foundation, “Where Discoveries Begin,” accessed October 4, 2020, <https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/srvyherd/>.

## **Chapter 1. Introduction**

In the summer of 2018, the author applied for Director of University Research Administrators (URAs) at Baylor University (BU) in Waco, Texas, which “is a private Christian university and a nationally ranked research institution.”<sup>3</sup> BU has an estimated annual revenue of \$736 million. Approximately 15% of its revenue is sourced from gifts and grants. The campus is composed of 47 academic centers and departments, with approximately 1,400 total faculty members. During the academic year 2019–2020, Baylor had 18,033 students (with 14,108 undergraduate students and 3,925 graduate/professional students).<sup>4</sup>

At the time, the author was the senior financial analyst within the Basic Sciences Division at a not-for-profit in Tampa, Florida. The research administration infrastructure at the not-for-profit was considerably established, with a robust and quite diverse funding portfolio. The department of URAs at Baylor, however, was a brand-new but purposeful concept within the Office of the Vice Provost for Research (OVPR). This Capstone Project is designed to detail the author’s experience in implementing a shared services model for URAs within research administration at BU. The author will now explore how and why this new department was formulated.

### **1.1. Background.**

In the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) Survey rankings, BU was ranked at No. 237.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Baylor University, “About Baylor,” accessed October 4, 2020, <https://www.baylor.edu/about/>.

<sup>4</sup> National Science Foundation, “Where Discoveries Begin,” accessed October 19, 2020, <https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/srvyherd/>.

<sup>5</sup> National Science Foundation, “Table 21. Higher Education R&D Expenditures, Ranked by All R&D Expenditures, by Source of Funds: FY 2017,” accessed October 20, 2020, [https://ncesdata.nsf.gov/herd/2017/html/herd2017\\_dst\\_21.html](https://ncesdata.nsf.gov/herd/2017/html/herd2017_dst_21.html).

Since FY 2012, Baylor's Research and Development (R&D) expenditures have experienced an average growth of 16%, with a 9% increase in R&D expenditures since the FY 2017 HERD Survey rankings as seen in Figure 1.1. BU R&D Expenditures FY 2012–2017. Baylor's ranking is anticipated to rise in November when the FY 2018 HERD Survey rankings are released.

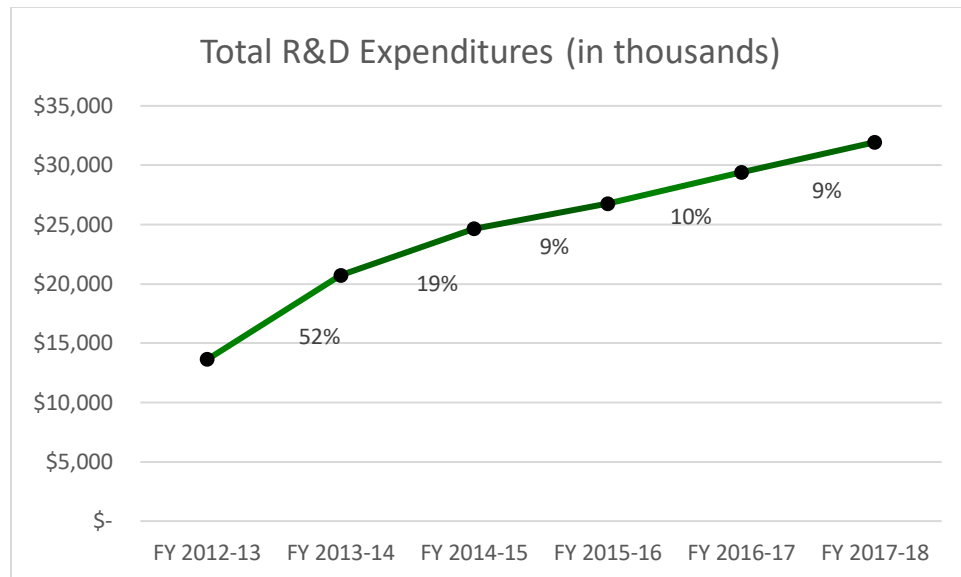


Figure 1.1. BU R&D Expenditures FY 2012–2017

The Carnegie Classification “has been the leading framework for recognizing and describing institutional diversity in U.S. higher education for the past four and a half decades.”<sup>6</sup> The 1994 edition of the Carnegie Classification defined Research I universities as those that:

- Offer a full range of baccalaureate programs
- Are committed to graduate education through the doctorate
- Give high priority to research

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<sup>6</sup> Carnegie Classifications, “The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education ®,” accessed October 4, 2020, <https://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/index.php>.

- Award 50 or more doctoral degrees each year
- Receive annually \$40 million or more in federal support<sup>7</sup>

The Carnegie Foundation reported that 59 institutions met the criteria in 1994.<sup>8</sup>

In their interim 2000 edition of the classification, the Carnegie Foundation renamed the category *Doctoral/research universities-extensive* in order to avoid the inference that the categories signify quality differences.<sup>9</sup> The foundation replaced their single classification system with a multiple classification system in their 2005 comprehensive overhaul of the classification framework<sup>10,11</sup> so that the term "Research I university" was no longer valid, though many universities continued to use it.

In 2015, the Carnegie Classification system reinstated the "Research I university" designations along with "Research II" and "Research III." The current system, introduced in 2018, includes the following three categories for doctoral universities:<sup>12</sup>

- R1: Doctoral Universities—Very high research activity
- R2: Doctoral Universities—High research activity
- D/PU: Doctoral/Professional Universities

In the 2018 classification, institutions were classified as either R1 or R2 if they "conferred at least 20 research/scholarship doctorates in 2016-17 and reported at least

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<sup>7</sup> University of Washington. "[Carnegie Research I Universities](#)." Retrieved 2009-03-18.

<sup>8</sup> David Weerts, *State Governments and Research Universities: A Framework for a Renewed Partnership* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 26.

<sup>9</sup> Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. "[Carnegie Classifications FAQs](#)." Archived from [the original](#) on 2013-04-14. Retrieved 2012-02-09.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Educause. "[Appendix E: Carnegie Classification \(2000\) Definitions](#)" (PDF). Archived from [the original](#) (PDF) on 2009-03-27. Retrieved 2009-03-18.

<sup>12</sup> "[Basic Classification Description](#)." [Center for Postsecondary Research](#). 2019. Retrieved March 18, 2019.

\$5 million in total research expenditures."<sup>13</sup> A research activity index was then calculated that included the following measures:

- R&D expenditures in Science and Engineering (S&E)
- R&D expenditures in non-S&E fields
- S&E research staff (postdoctoral appointees and other non-faculty research staff with doctorates)
- Doctoral conferrals in humanities, social science, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields, and in other fields (e.g. business, education, public policy, social work)

These four measures were combined using principal component analysis to create two indices of research activity, one representing an aggregate level of research activity and the other representing per-capita research activity. Institutions that were high on both indices were classified among R1.<sup>14,15</sup>

BU is classified as an R2 university according to the Carnegie Classification system. During the spring of 2018, "Baylor announced purposeful, holistic plans to establish the University as the preeminent Christian research university and to pursue recognition by the Carnegie Foundation as an R1 university."<sup>16</sup> Illuminate, the university's strategic plan, provides the framework to attain and exceed those goals and to propel Baylor to be a place where excellence in research advances human understanding and uncovers solutions to the world's greatest challenges. Shaped by

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<sup>13</sup> "Basic Classification Description." *Center for Postsecondary Research*. 2019. Retrieved March 18, 2019.

<sup>14</sup> "Basic Classification Description." *Center for Postsecondary Research*. 2019. Retrieved March 18, 2019.

<sup>15</sup> Wikipedia, "Research I University," September 26, 2020, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Research\\_I\\_university](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Research_I_university).

<sup>16</sup> Baylor University, "Priorities," accessed October 4, 2020, <https://www.baylor.edu/research/index.php?id=963490>.



key input from Baylor faculty members and administrators, Illuminate charts the course toward R1 through the establishment of five signature academic initiatives. These areas of focus include:

- Health
- Data sciences
- Materials science
- Human flourishing, leadership, and ethics
- Baylor In Latin America
- Other research initiatives

Throughout these areas and across the university, Baylor is committed to research marked by quality, impact, and visibility, undergirded by a foundational belief that all truth is God's truth. These pursuits are supported by *Give Light*, Baylor's \$1.1 billion comprehensive philanthropic campaign. The campaign focuses support on facilities, research and program initiatives, student scholarships, and faculty endowment.<sup>17</sup>

The OVPR assists faculty members from all academic units in identifying, obtaining, and managing the funding needed to support their research and scholarship. Internal "seed" funding, matching grant proposal funding, searchable online funding databases, grant writing seminars, proposal support, and travel awards to national funding agencies are only a few of the services provided to the faculty by the OVPR.<sup>18</sup> During the 2019 spring semester, Baylor Research implemented *Elevate*, a research transformation initiative.

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<sup>17</sup> Baylor University, "Priorities," accessed October 4, 2020, <https://www.baylor.edu/research/index.php?id=963490>.

<sup>18</sup> Baylor University, "Vice Provost for Research," accessed October 4, 2020, <https://www.baylor.edu/research/resources/index.php?id=962693>.

The aim of Elevate is to guide the research transformation at BU and facilitate progress toward research goals outlined within Illuminate. This project seeks to 1) realign central research administration functions to strengthen collaboration, improve efficiencies, and clarify responsibilities, 2) establish consistent and university-wide local support for faculty and decrease administrative burden, 3) update research policies and business processes to strengthen compliance and increase efficiencies, and 4) develop performance measures to improve accountability and establish service expectations.<sup>19</sup> This initiative is expected to further drive the continued growth of Baylor R&D expenditures and therefore further elevate Baylor in its HERD Survey rankings.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem.**

As presented by the author, along with Kevin Cook and Lianne Seyferth with the Huron Consulting Group, at the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Financial Research Administration (FRA) Conference— “Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions are Transforming the Research Delivery Model”—the problem that Baylor Research was facing was divided into two types of challenges: OVPR and the research community.<sup>20</sup> The challenges faced by the OVPR include the following:

- Limited and/or nonexistent support for faculty conducting research, increasing burden on central offices.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Baylor University, “Elevate,” accessed October 4, 2020, <https://www.baylor.edu/research/resources/index.php?id=963884>.

<sup>20</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, “Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model,” in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 19.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

- Inconsistent internal business processes and training for central and local staff, identifying a need for standardization.<sup>22</sup>
- R1 Carnegie Classification goal without necessary resources.<sup>23</sup>

The challenges faced by the BU Research community included the following:

- Dissatisfaction with current service levels for the Principal Investigators (PIs).<sup>24</sup>
- Lack of awareness of the services offered by the OVPR.<sup>25</sup>
- Confirmed need to improve faculty engagement and compliance adherence.<sup>26</sup>
- Lack of career track and development opportunities for staff.<sup>27</sup>

### **1.3. Project Question.**

The question this Capstone Project addresses is how does Project Aim 2 of the Elevate Initiative—establish consistent and university-wide local support for faculty and decrease administrative burden—allow the OVPR to facilitate the R1 strategic aspirations of BU?

This Capstone Project will elaborate on how the implementation of a shared services model, such as the Elevate Initiative, within research administration will ultimately result in a refined faculty service delivery model that permits colleges and universities to support full-time research administrators to maintain their dedicated staff while establishing a pool of qualified resources to serve the colleges and universities with limited to no personnel. The goal should ultimately result in increased quality

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<sup>22</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 19.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

proposals as well as greater expenditures for awarded sponsored projects. These goals are vital for Baylor to achieve its status as an R1 university.

This refined shared services model will also allow faculty members to focus on their research's technical aspects, rather than dedicating a significant portion of their time to administrative duties. According to the results of the 2018 Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP), “since 2012, the average estimated time taken away from research by pre-award and post-award requirements related to federally-funded research has increased from 42.3% to 44.3%.”<sup>28</sup> BU hopes to reduce the PI administrative burden.

#### **1.4. Project Objectives.**

The objectives of this Capstone Project are to:

- Prepare a booklet on a shared services model that can be used by research administrators.
- Define shared services.
- Define the duties of a URA engaged in implementing the shared services model.
- Explain why a hybrid model was selected for implementation.
- Demonstrate how the administrative burden for research faculty at BU was reduced.
- Demonstrate how the R1 strategic goal was facilitated.

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<sup>28</sup> Sandra L. Schneider, “Results of the 2018 FDP Faculty Workload Survey: Input for Optimizing Time on Active Research,” Results of the 2018 FDP Faculty Workload Survey: Input for optimizing time on active research. § (2019).

- Recommend whether this model should be implemented at other institutions.

### **1.5. Significance.**

As explained within Section 1.1 Background, BU established a strategic plan to achieve R1 status by the Carnegie Foundation. The benefits of shared administration lie not only in facilitating this strategic plan but also in:

- Aligning resources
- Working more efficiently
- Providing consistent service
- Pooling experience
- The disseminating of school priorities
- Responsiveness to customer needs
- Consistency in standards/control
- Economies of scale

### **1.6. Exclusions and Limitations.**

This paper will not address the other aims of Elevate:

1) realign central research administration functions to strengthen collaboration, improve efficiencies, and clarify responsibilities, 3) update research policies and business processes to strengthen compliance and increase efficiencies, and 4) develop performance measures to improve accountability and establish service expectations.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Baylor University, "Elevate," accessed October 4, 2020, <https://www.baylor.edu/research/resources/index.php?id=963884>.

It will solely focus on implementing the shared services model within research administration, formulated to assist Baylor to fulfill its strategic plan of being an R1 institution while concurrently alleviating the administrative burden placed upon its research faculty.

## Chapter 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Overview of Literature Review.

The research administration infrastructure can be affiliated with terminologies such as departmental administrators, cradle-to-grave, pre-award administration, and post-award administration. The term “shared services,” however, may not be commonplace in daily vernacular. In fact, this concept is not that unfamiliar to the author, as it was the un-official infrastructure established at the not-for-profit where she worked before joining BU. Therefore, the author conducted a literature review to assess familiarity of this term in the research enterprise and its existence as a thriving and functioning model at other academic institutions.

### 2.2. Details of Review.

Under our old model, business services were perceived as low-value and non-core. With shared services, administrative staff has been able to reinvent themselves as high-value service providers. They're now seen as partners—and it's because we took the time to get our model right, to focus on our customers, and to simplify and standardize our processes. You can't rush shared services if you want it to last.<sup>30</sup>

The concept of shared services was explored within an Education Advisory Board (EAB) article: “*Shared Services Primer, Understanding the Opportunities for Scaling Administrative Services.*” In this article, the EAB defined shared services as “the consolidation of administrative activity previously performed by unit-based generalist staff into centralized delivery point in order to increase service quality and reduce labor costs for customers.”<sup>31</sup>

The idea of shared services was further explored in a January/February 2014 NCURA Magazine article: “Shared Service Center Implementations—an Inclusive

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<sup>30</sup> “Shared Services Primer Understanding the Opportunities for Scaling Administrative Services,” EAB, 2020.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 2.

Approach,” authored by Megan Cluver and Nick Stevens. The authors described shared service centers as “an opportunity to re-define how the common business functions and transactions that support a university’s mission are conducted.”<sup>32</sup> The authors further communicated that:

To succeed in a university setting, shared service center implementations must take into account the unique environment of higher education, including elements such as shared governance and multiple funding streams. Implementation and planning should be approached as a collaborative process, integrating input from Principal Investigators (PIs), faculty, and staff to develop an approach to providing services that fit within the context of university culture.<sup>33</sup>

A case study in research shared services by Lee, et al, was discussed within the March/April 2016 NCURA Magazine. According to the authors, the goal of research shared services is “to reorganize transaction-based activities that occur in decentralized units and departments, so they become the core services of a new, specialized organization or group”.<sup>34</sup> The authors further elaborated that:

While there is no one-size-fits-all model for research shared services, this type of organization generally has the following attributes: A level of centralization of services that are traditionally performed by local (school/department) research administration personnel, standardization of these services across the stakeholders served, and a Service Level Agreement (SLA) that guarantees support and level of services provided to customers, which can include a feedback mechanism and metrics to measure the quality of support being given.<sup>35</sup>

The study concluded that “a research shared services organization has the potential to bring a consistent and high level of service to PIs, while also minimizing

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<sup>32</sup> Megan Cluver and Nick Stevens, “Shared Service Center Implementations—an Inclusive Approach,” *NCURA Magazine*, 2014.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>34</sup> Jenna Lee, Brian Squilla, and Andrew Steil, “Research Shared Services: A Case Study in Implementation,” *NCURA Magazine*, 2016, 37.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*



compliance risk and ensuring research administrators serving schools and departments are skilled, trained professionals”.<sup>36</sup>

### **2.3. Applicability of Literature Review.**

The EAB Shared Services Primer article further solidified the concept of the shared services model, as “EAB has compiled a Compendium of Shared Services Profiles to help institutions understand the many manifestations of shared services across the higher education landscape.”<sup>37</sup>

The key factors identified within EAB’s definition of shared services were:

- Consolidation of transactional business activities into a single delivery point<sup>38</sup>
- Focus on communications and high-quality service<sup>39</sup>
- Commitment to continuous improvement<sup>40</sup>

The author is presenting these key factors as they:

- Facilitate the benefits of shared administration
- Solidify the significance of this Capstone Project
- Align with BU's listed benefits of shared administration within Section 1.5.

#### **Significance**

The case study of Lee et al, documents not only the concept but also the existence of the model at TJU. Research administration is managed through “Research

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<sup>36</sup> Jenna Lee, Brian Squilla, and Andrew Steil, “Research Shared Services: A Case Study in Implementation,” *NCURA Magazine*, 2016, 39.

<sup>37</sup> Shared Services Primer Understanding the Opportunities for Scaling Administrative Services,” *EAB*, 2020, 11.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

Administration Center of Excellence (RACE), a shared service center that provides faculty-centric research administration support across TJU.”<sup>41</sup>

The RACE Vision at TJU is handling the business of research so that faculty can perform the research. Its objectives are to:

- enhance service for all researchers across campus
- ensure consistent processes and procedures across departments
- provide our grants management staff a clear career path<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Thomas Jefferson University, “Office of Research Administration,” accessed October 5, 2020, [https://www.jefferson.edu/university/research\\_administration.html](https://www.jefferson.edu/university/research_administration.html).

<sup>42</sup> Thomas Jefferson University, “RACE,” accessed October 4, 2020, <https://research.jefferson.edu/resources/sponsored-research/race.html>.

## Chapter 3. Need(s) Assessment

### 3.1. Need(s) Assessment.

In the Spring of 2018, Baylor University launched the “Illuminate” Strategic Plan, with Research and Scholarship as one of the plan’s foundational pillars. Baylor also aspires to achieve national recognition with the R1 Carnegie Classification, which is determined by R&D expenditures, science and engineering research staff, and doctoral conferrals.<sup>43</sup>

Baylor’s leadership and faculty have widespread support for the university’s mission and Illuminate’s core components. However, it was noted that the lack of consistent administrative support was inhibiting the ability to prepare, submit, and manage growing research activity.<sup>44</sup>

#### 3.1.1. Assessment of Need(s).

The BU summary report noted:

The Huron Consulting Group partnered with Baylor University to evaluate the institution’s research administration operations, including pre-award, post-award, and compliance activities, to determine if the operations are adequately aligned to enable effective management of sponsored award activity and will position Baylor for continued growth.<sup>45</sup>

The objectives included (but were not limited to):

- Improving service and support to Baylor’s PIs<sup>46</sup>
- Identifying core performance measures to be enhanced or developed to improve research administration management<sup>47</sup>

The research administration assessment presented the OVPR and research community challenges outlined in Section 1.2. Statement of the Problem. The need for

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<sup>43</sup> Huron, “Baylor University Research Administration Assessment Summary Report,” 2019, 3.

<sup>44</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, “Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model,” in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 13.

<sup>45</sup> Huron, “Baylor University Research Administration Assessment Summary Report,” 2019, 5.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

the implementation of the shared services model at Baylor can be summarized in three broad concepts:

1. Illuminate, Baylor's strategic plan (R1 goal)
2. Assessment of the current state of the research environment (OVPR and research community challenges)
3. The concurrent Ignite initiative (going cloud-based)

What is a shared services model? While there is no one-size-fits-all model for realigning decentralized administrative functions into research administration service delivery models (often referred to as shared services), shared services models generally have the following attributes:

1. A higher degree of specialization of functions that are traditionally performed by local (school/department/center) personnel.<sup>48</sup>
2. Standardization of these services across the stakeholders served.<sup>49</sup>
3. An SLA that guarantees a level of support and services provided to customers.<sup>50</sup>

A shared services model is a scalable approach to faculty service delivery that is readily adaptable to increases in research volume and ensures consistent and effective research administration support across all departments.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 16.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 17.

### 3.2. Metrics.

Based on similar engagements, the Huron team used the following commonly accepted pillars of administrative efficiency and effectiveness that dictate an organization's operations to guide BU's engagement approach, see Chart 3.1. Huron Consulting Five Pillars of Administrative and Operational Improvement. While the interplay of these pillars is specific to each organization, in general, they include:

A. **Organization and people**, including structural alignment, clarification of Roles and Responsibilities (R&R), and effectiveness of resources and the training programs used to support them.<sup>52</sup>

B. **Business Processes** that support research administration and mitigate compliance risk.<sup>53</sup>

C. **Services and Support** to Baylor's Principal Investigators and its impact on PIs.<sup>54</sup>

D. **Technologies** employed in conducting research administration.<sup>55</sup>

E. **Performance Measurement and Quality Improvement** to improve research administration management to inform operational and strategic decisions.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Huron, "Baylor University Research Administration Assessment Summary Report," 2019, 6.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.



Chart 3.1. The Five Pillars of Administrative and Operational Improvement<sup>57</sup>

Huron has tailored its approach to focusing on organizational structure and people, business processes, performance improvement, and customer service to faculty. The recommendations that Huron provided within their final report was centered around these five pillars.<sup>58</sup> This Capstone Project will focus on the faculty service pillar.

Huron identified several overarching themes aligned with the key pillars of review. These themes will help to provide context to the overall evaluations and recommendations.<sup>59</sup> Within service and support, Huron observed:

- Many faculty members were unaware of the services being provided by the OVPR.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Huron, "Baylor University Research Administration Assessment Summary Report," 2019, 6.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

- Faculty provided feedback regarding the inconsistent level of support provided across pre- and post-award functions.<sup>61</sup>
- Faculty members were cautiously optimistic about creating the URA role but raised questions and concerns regarding how these resources would be managed and deployed.<sup>62</sup>

### **3.3 Sources.**

To administer a research administration needs assessment of BU, Huron:

- Conducted a project kick-off meeting with research administration leadership to confirm project objectives.<sup>63</sup>
- Conducted targeted interview sessions with key stakeholders, including 21 research administration leadership, management, and staff members, as well as 24 center, school, and department administration leaders and staff.<sup>64</sup>
- Reviewed documents provided by the OVPR, including organizational charts, policies, procedures, forms, and performance data.<sup>65</sup>
- Reviewed research accounting business processes in relation to industry best practices.<sup>66</sup>

Huron also conducted a review of the current state allocation of staff based on the full-time equivalents (FTEs) that existed within the units at the assessment time. Through the

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<sup>61</sup> Huron, "Baylor University Research Administration Assessment Summary Report," 2019, 9.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

review, two types of staff members supporting research administration functions were identified as shown in Table 3.1. Current-State Staff Allocation Analysis below:

Dedicated Staff	Fragmented Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Served as a dedicated research administration resource</li> <li>•Supported a portion of the activities defined under the future-state URA service catalog</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Did not serve as a dedicated research administration resource</li> <li>•Supported a mix of both research and non-research-related administrative activities</li> </ul>

Table 3.1. Current-State Staff Allocation Analysis<sup>67</sup>

As part of the assessment phase, Huron issued an opportunity identification survey that asked for research faculty and staff input to identify local research administration functions and services that are considered "institutionally effective" and those that have "room for improvement" in regard to the Baylor campus.

The following functions and services have room for improvement, as identified by the sample of research faculty members and staff who responded to the survey.

- Monitoring award balances, burn rates, rates of spending and budget forecasting = 76%<sup>68</sup>
- Processing subcontract-related activity (invoice receipt, follow-up, and coordination with Accounts Payable) = 76%<sup>69</sup>
- Reviewing accuracy and allowability of purchases on sponsored projects = 67%<sup>70</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 20.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.



- Preparing proposals, including budgets, biosketches, and other administrative components = 62%<sup>71</sup>
- Preparing progress report submissions (draft support and submission) = 62%<sup>72</sup>

The result was a detailed assessment with recommendations for improvement. Within the report, a faculty service delivery model was a provided recommendation:

Baylor should implement a refined model of faculty service delivery as part of the University Research Administrators function to ensure consistent and effective research administration support across all departments. A shared service model is a scalable approach to faculty service delivery that is readily adaptable to increases in research volume.<sup>73</sup>

### **3.4. Committees.**

No official committees were used for this Capstone Project.

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<sup>71</sup>Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 21.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Huron, Baylor University Research Administration Assessment Summary Report, 2019, 13.

## Chapter 4. Project Description

### 4.1. Discussion of Project Elements.

This Capstone Project aims to describe the creation of a new department (URAs) within the OVPR at BU. This project will also explore the establishment of its infrastructure. The URA concept was formulated before Illuminate, Elevate, and the incorporation of Huron to assess the research enterprise at BU. Table 4.2., below, describes the typical work performed by the URA under the initial concept:

Description	Pct. of Time
Once awarded, administer the grant by performing tasks including (but not limited to): record preparation and review, processing personnel (both internal and external) related to grant and assist in purchasing transactions to facilitate the research.	30%
Identify potential research funders and support faculty in preparing proposals for sponsored projects, ensuring compliance with all Baylor and sponsor guidelines	25%
Manage pre-and post-award ops related to funded research grants, ie: oversee budget and proposal processing, tracking of signoff procedures, and timely submissions of proposals to OSP. Ensure timely submission of required sponsor reports as necessary.	20%
Develop and revise policies and procedures for managing research projects within the designated school to ensure compliance with OSP guidelines. Develop and present training workshops to assist faculty and staff in admin of grant and research budgets.	10%
Help to identify and coordinate resolution on various compliance and data security requirements of grants.	5%
Maintain in-depth knowledge of University's Human Resources system to facilitate requesting, hiring, and processing of personnel for grant-related positions.	5%
Maintain contact with Office of Vice Provost for Research and Marketing/Communications to maximize opportunities for publication and visibility of award proposals.	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.2. Typical Work Performed by the URA<sup>74</sup>

However, the research administration assessment conducted by Huron resulted in what the author would describe as a more significant overhaul of the URA role than as previously described.

### 4.2. Blueprint Development Phase.

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<sup>74</sup> Baylor University Human Resources, "Job Description for University Research Administrator" (Waco, n.d.), pp. 1-2.

The Blueprint is the guiding design document for the future-state Baylor URA model. The following components, as listed and defined within Table 4.3. Baylor URA Blueprint Components, were used to conceptualize the development of the URA Blueprint:

- Organizational Model<sup>75</sup>
- Allocation and Deployment of Resources<sup>76</sup>
- Service Catalog<sup>77</sup>
- Service and Support Model<sup>78</sup>
- Governance<sup>79</sup>
- Operational Design Components<sup>80</sup>

Components	Definitions
Organizational Model	Reporting relationship of research administration staff supporting the URA team, including the number of proposed full-time equivalents (FTE) to administer all functions of the service catalog.
Allocation and Deployment of Resources	Menu of URA model deployment options for staff to specific units under common processes, reporting structures, and leadership.
Service Catalog	Inventory of all in-scope activities to be associated with the URA team.
Service and Support Model	Roles and responsibilities of the URA team, including points of interaction between the units served and Baylor central offices (i.e. OVPR teams, Controller's Office, Human Resources, Procurement, etc.).
Governance	The structures and methods to drive accountability for effective faculty service delivery (e.g. committees, service level agreements, key performance indicators, etc.)
Operational Design Components	Other components that are key to the model design (e.g. space)

Table 4.3. Baylor URA Blueprint Components<sup>81</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 23.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

The remaining portion of this chapter will highlight each component. The Blueprint can be viewed in its entirety under Appendix 2, beginning on page 58.

#### 4.2.1. Organizational Model.

Baylor's OVPR selected the single center vs. service pods design options, as is a centralized model. Service pods tend to provide unit-based services and mimic more of the current state of Baylor Research, whereas the single center allows for shared staffing that services the institution rather than a specific school, college, department, and/or unit, as depicted below within Figure 4.2. Organizational Model: Design Options.

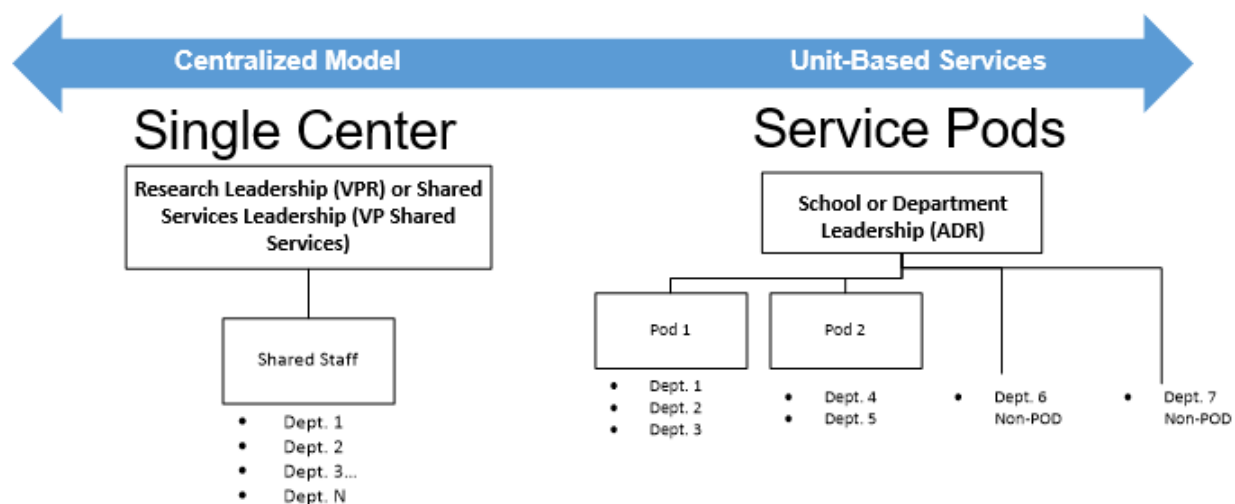


Figure 4.2. Organizational Model: Design Options<sup>82</sup>

This single center design model would also provide a hybrid model of design services, rather than a cradle-to-grave or specialization model. Cradle-to-grave models are responsible for supporting all research administration functions (pre- and post-award), while specialization models are responsible for supporting specific research

<sup>82</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 24.

administration functions (i.e. only pre- or only post-awards).<sup>83</sup> In contrast, in Baylor's OVPR's hybrid model, the URAs are responsible for providing specific services classified as a pre- and/or post-award administration function. The URA duties are in support of these offices. The URA is not a representation of nor do they function at any authorized institutional office level.

#### **4.2.2. Allocation and Deployment of Resources.**

The proposed URA model at Baylor suggested an estimated 11–12 FTEs, as reflected within Figure 4.3. Baylor URA FTE Calculation. This FTE headcount was informed by a combination of quantitative analysis and qualitative feedback:

- The quantitative analysis was based on Baylor's current research volume, benchmarking data from peer institutions, and industry knowledge of best practices.<sup>84</sup>
- The qualitative feedback was informed by the feedback received from in-person meetings with local staff and research faculty.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 25.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

### Benchmarking Averages

Proposals per FTE	Active Awards per FTE	Research Expenditures per FTE	Active Faculty per FTE
30	25	\$2M	16

### Baylor FY18 Proposal and Award Data

Count of Proposals	Active Awards	Research Expenditures	Active Faculty
357	362	\$15.9M	196
<i>Calculated FTEs per research volume</i>			
11.9	14.5	7.9	12.3

*\*based on NSF HERD Survey and internal Baylor data*

Average of calculated FTEs:  
11.7 FTEs

Figures 4.3. Baylor URA FTE Calculation<sup>86</sup>

### 4.2.3. Service Catalog.

The in-scope URA responsibilities that were determined include (but are not limited to):

- Ensure compliance with institutional and sponsor-specific policies.<sup>87</sup>
- Assist with developing the administrative components of a proposal, e.g. a budget, budget justification, biosketches.<sup>88</sup>
- Coordinate the routing and submission process with the pre-award office.<sup>89</sup>
- Serve as the primary liaison between PIs and the pre-award office, ensure timeliness in submissions, and communicate internal and external deadlines.<sup>90</sup>
- Facilitate the communication of award terms and conditions, status of award review (if applicable), and other relevant updates to PIs.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 27.

<sup>87</sup> "University Research Administrators Initiative Blueprint" (Waco, TX: Baylor University Office of the Vice Provost for Research, 2019), 9.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

- Review awarded budget modifications, compliance documentation, Just-in-Time (JIT) requests, etc.<sup>92</sup>
- Support the award set-up process in the financial system.<sup>93</sup>
- Review the established award in the financial system for accuracy and submit requests to the pre- and post-award offices as needed.<sup>94</sup>
- Identify the need for a subcontract.<sup>95</sup>
- Monitor active subcontracts to ensure programmatic progress and compliance.<sup>96</sup>
- Review subcontract invoices for accuracy and address questions regarding payment.<sup>97</sup>
- Submit requests to the pre- and post-award offices for project changes, prior approvals, etc.<sup>98</sup>
- Submit requests for award extensions, revisions, etc. to the pre- and post-award offices.<sup>99</sup>
- Serve as the primary liaison between PIs and the pre- and post-award offices to ensure timeliness in submission of all relevant documentation and communicate deadlines.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> "University Research Administrators Initiative Blueprint" (Waco, TX: Baylor University Office of the Vice Provost for Research, 2019), 9.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

- Advise PIs and the post-award office of cost share commitments and potential risks.<sup>101</sup>
- Monitor and track all cost share commitments through the life of the award to ensure commitments are met.<sup>102</sup>
- Develop and submit cost transfer requests and documentation in coordination with PIs.<sup>103</sup>
- Ensure cost transfers have been correctly processed and follow up with the post-award office as needed.<sup>104</sup>
- Conduct a limited post-audit review of research purchases as a part of monthly reconciliation processes to ensure expenses are allowable and allocable.<sup>105</sup>
- Review and approve proposed payroll allocations for available budget and allowability.<sup>106</sup>
- Generate and review monthly financial reports of all sponsored activities with PIs.<sup>107</sup>
- Monitor award budgets to expenses and advise PIs accordingly (e.g. burn rate, budget/expense forecasting).<sup>108</sup>
- Review grant financials before the submission of sponsor-required financial reports.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> "University Research Administrators Initiative Blueprint" (Waco, TX: Baylor University Office of the Vice Provost for Research, 2019), 11.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.



- Communicate effort policies to PIs and research staff, including the impact of variances (e.g. >25% effort changes) if they occur.<sup>110</sup>
- Partner with PIs to distribute and track the effort reporting and certification process.<sup>111</sup>
- Notify PIs of outstanding residuals and/or deficits and coordinate the close-out process with the post-award office.<sup>112</sup>
- Ensure all appropriate expenditures and cost transfers are posted before internal close-out deadlines (e.g. 60 days after an award's end date).<sup>113</sup>
- Guide PIs regarding the use of designated funds (for payroll and non-payroll expenses) when sponsored accounts are not appropriate.<sup>114</sup>

These in-scope URA responsibilities are summarized within the bubble chart, Figure

4.4. Overview of Functions Provided by the URAs, below:

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<sup>110</sup> "University Research Administrators Initiative Blueprint" (Waco, TX: Baylor University Office of the Vice Provost for Research, 2019), 13.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 14.

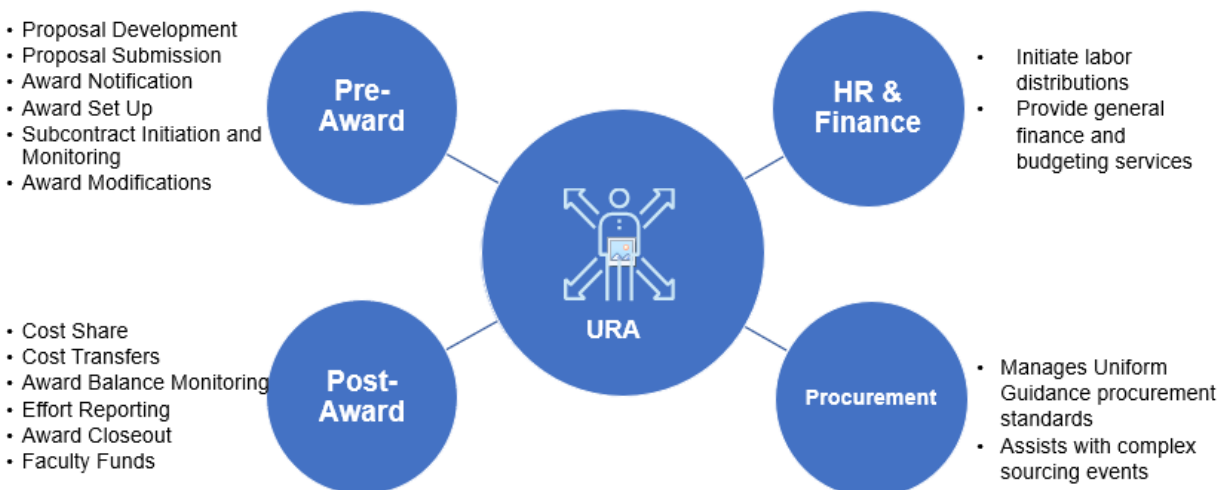


Figure 4.4. Overview of Functions Provided by the URAs<sup>115</sup>

#### 4.2.4. Service and Support Model.

An R&R matrix was developed that provides a detailed listing of the services (roles) provided by not only the URAs but also other Baylor central offices (such as pre-award), OVPR teams (such as research compliance), and other institutional units, such as the Office of General Counsel (OGC). Responsibility is depicted as:

- Primary (P)
- Secondary (S)
- Input (I)

Table 4.4. Baylor URA Roles & Responsibilities Matrix: Pre-Award, below, is an example from the R&R matrix for proposal development and submission functions:

<sup>115</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 29.

Role	URAs	PI	Research Adv	Pre-Award	Post-Award	Research Compliance	General Counsel	Dev and Corp Rel'n
Search for proposal opportunities	S	P	S					P
Develop proposal - administrative portion, budget, budget justification	P	S	I	I				I
Determine the need for subcontract(s)	S	P		I				
Develop proposal - subcontracts (LOI, SOW, budget, budget justification, Commitment Form)	P	S		I				
Complete Conflict of Interest documentation for proposal	S	P						
Enforce internal submission deadlines	S		I	P				P
Prepare JIT information (Other Support, IRB approval, IACUC approval)	P	S		I		I		
Review proposal information	S		I	P				P
Revise/correct proposal based on review	P	S	I	I				
Review JIT information	S			P				
Revise/correct JIT information based on review	S	P						
Submit JIT information to sponsor	S			P				
Determine the need for feasibility assessment	P							

Table 4.4. Baylor URA Roles & Responsibilities Matrix: Pre-Award<sup>116</sup>

The detailed R&R matrix can be viewed under Appendix 3, beginning on page 59.

#### 4.2.5. Governance.

An effective faculty service delivery model's goal is to create accountability to the colleges, schools, and units being supported by the URA model and align oversight with consistent performance standards.<sup>117</sup> The necessary inputs for a successful faculty service delivery model are depicted below within Table 4.5. Governance Overview:

<sup>116</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 30.

<sup>117</sup> "University Research Administrators Initiative Blueprint" (Waco, TX: Baylor University Office of the Vice Provost for Research, 2019), 38.

Governance Committee(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprised of Academic Leadership (Deans, Associate Deans of Research, etc.) and select research faculty that interact with the service delivery model</li> <li>Meet quarterly to review the unit against the service level agreement (SLA)</li> </ul>
Service Level Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defines the services and deliverables that will be provided and the performance standards that can be expected of the unit</li> </ul>
Satisfaction Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish baseline and assess relative end-user attitudes toward local research administration services</li> <li>Issued frequently (e.g. quarterly) after go live, then annually</li> </ul>
Research Faculty/Shared Service Staff Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal feedback loops</li> <li>Helps identify problems early on</li> </ul>
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measurable benchmarks that can track progress over time</li> <li>Ensures workload consistency</li> <li>Informs business need for staffing levels</li> </ul>

Table 4.5. Governance Overview<sup>118</sup>

The necessary inputs for a successful faculty service delivery model include:

- Governance committee(s): The governance committee will review performance and identify service gaps for the URA unit's expectations to ensure all parties are fulfilling the requirements outlined by the SLA.<sup>119</sup>
- SLA: This agreement will represent an agreed-upon service expectation for those receiving service and those providing it.<sup>120</sup> The detailed Baylor URA SLA can be viewed under Appendix 4, beginning on page 60. The following is a print screen of Section I—General Information and Objectives:<sup>121</sup>

<sup>118</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 31.

<sup>119</sup> "University Research Administrators Initiative Blueprint" (Waco, TX: Baylor University Office of the Vice Provost for Research, 2019), 41.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>121</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera and Andrew Steil, "Service Level Agreement" (Waco, n.d.), 4.

## **Section I – General Information and Objectives**

### **SLA Purpose and Expectation**

The purpose of this Service Level Agreement (SLA) is to establish the foundation for a cooperative partnership between University Research Administrators (URA) and units it serves.

This SLA will outline:

- The services that URA offers and the working relationship between URAs and the units served.
- The key performance indicators used to measure the quality of service provided.

URAs will work closely with the units to meet their research administration needs. Communication, feedback, and accountability are critical to ensuring excellent customer service.

### **URA Mission**

Provide consistent and high-quality pre- and post-award administrative support to all Baylor research faculty.

### **URA Vision**

Serving as Baylor University's administrative facilitators of research.

### **URA Guiding Principles**

- Provide services designed to streamline, standardize, and facilitate grant acquisition and administration through a network of trained research administrators.
- Support Baylor's research vision to become an R1/Tier 1 institution by providing faculty an administrative partnership geared toward decision support and strategic thinking.
- Deliver standardized and consistent levels of service, regardless of the customer base.

### **URA Goals**

1. **Decrease the administrative burden** placed on Baylor research faculty.
2. **Serve as a trusted and reliable resource** for Baylor research faculty.
3. **Ensure provision of excellent customer service** to faculty, staff, and sponsors.
4. **Serve as a conduit for communication** between research faculty and central administrative offices.
5. **Translate research financial matters** in a manner that is comprehensible and beneficial to the advancement of research.
6. **Provide streamlined and standardized processes** that support researchers in an increasingly complex and competitive research environment.
7. **Deliver polished and professional research administrative services** with a focus on continuous improvement.
8. **Enable education, training, and professional development** for URA staff.

- Satisfaction survey: A satisfaction survey will establish a baseline and assess relative end-user attitudes toward research administration service delivery for in-scope functions.<sup>122</sup>
- Research faculty/URA staff relationships: The implementation of community feedback tools, such as a survey link included in URA staff email signatures, provides leadership the ability to celebrate “wins” and create corrective action plans when customer service deviates from the SLA.<sup>123</sup>
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Metrics allow URA leadership, college/school/unit leaders, and the governance committee to evaluate the performance of the unit.<sup>124</sup> Below are the KPIs depicted within the current rendition of the Baylor URA SLA:

#### Pre-Award<sup>125</sup>

##### Service Level Measures

Percentage of proposals that do not require pre-award to return them to URA for revisions before submission to sponsor

Table 4.6. Key Performance Indicators: Pre-Award<sup>126</sup>

<sup>122</sup> "University Research Administrators Initiative Blueprint" (Waco, TX: Baylor University Office of the Vice Provost for Research, 2019), 43.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>125</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera and Andrew Steil, "Service Level Agreement" (Waco, n.d.), 7.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

**Post-Award<sup>127</sup>**

Service Level Measures
Number of advance accounts open for more than 90 days
Number of accounts where the project period has ended and the account is in deficit (> \$1,000) or there is a surplus remaining (> \$1,000)
Percentage of accounts reviewed with a PI in a given month
Number of financial reports that are submitted past the sponsor due date
Number of open awards, but the project has ended, more than 90 days before the current date
The number and dollar amount of cost transfers both more and less than 90 days before the current date
Number of effort reports certified by the institutional due date

Table 4.7. Key Performance Indicators: Post-Award<sup>128</sup>**Faculty Service-Related Metrics<sup>129</sup>**

Service Level Measure
PI and ADR satisfaction with URA support (annual survey)
PI and ADR satisfaction survey distributed by URA leadership monthly for the first year of the URA implementation to ensure service levels are being met or exceeded
PI and ADR transactional surveys available on the URA website and in the email signatures of URA team members (available for completion any time)

Table 4.8. Key Performance Indicators: Faculty Service-Related Metrics<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera and Andrew Steil, “Service Level Agreement” (Waco, n.d.), 7.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter 5. Methodology

### 5.1. Methodology Overview.

The current state of the URA model at BU is the result of the following:

- Huron conducted the BU research administration assessment. This assessment involved 21 research administration leadership, management, and staff members, as well as 24 center, school, and department administration leaders and staff.
- The implementation of a hybrid research delivery model of pre- and post-award administration, based upon the identified functions and services that have “room for improvement,” as identified by the sample of research faculty members and staff who responded to a survey.
- The blueprint components were conceptualized as a result of interviews conducted with 25+ faculty members and staff involved in the day-to-day management of local research administration activities.<sup>131</sup>
- The proposed URA FTE calculation is based upon benchmarking averages and Baylor FY 2018 proposal and award data.

The next steps included:

- Allocation and deployment of resources
- Funding model determination
- Recruitment and staffing

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<sup>131</sup> "University Research Administrators Initiative Blueprint" (Waco, TX: Baylor University Office of the Vice Provost for Research, 2019), 7.



### 5.1.1 Allocation and Deployment of Resources.

Staff allocation was based on the current pre- and post-award volume in the units, as calculated based on peer benchmarking averages.<sup>132</sup> Figure 5.5. Selected Model: Allocation by Current Research Volume and Resources, depicts the established organizational chart of the BU URA allocation model.

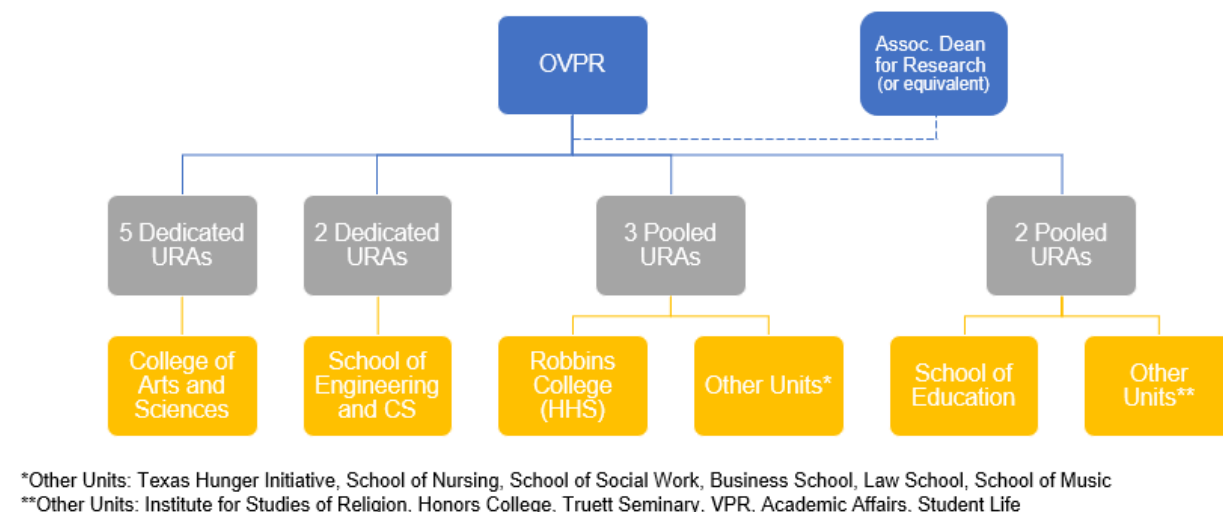


Figure 5.5. Selected Model: Allocation by Current Research Volume and Resources<sup>133</sup>

<sup>132</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 28.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

### 5.1.2. Funding Model.

Sample representative funding models are depicted below within Figure 5.6.

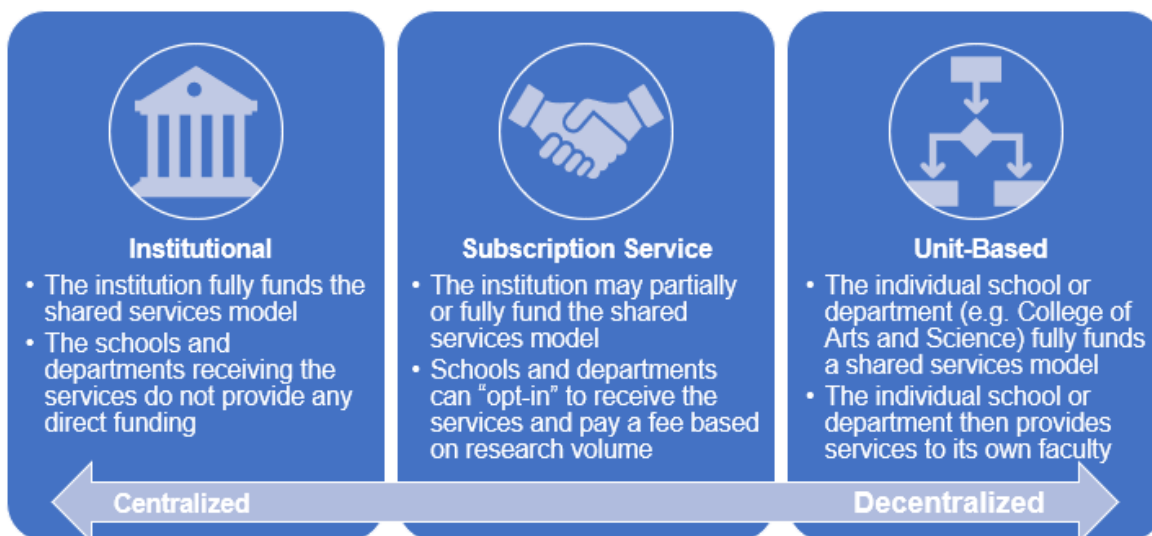


Figure 5.6. Funding Models<sup>134</sup>

Institutional funding for all positions at BU is centralized. As a result, the URAs are centrally funded with no funding provided directly by the schools. This is not always the case at other institutions.<sup>135</sup>

### 5.1.3. Recruitment and Staffing.

Baylor's OVPR and Huron coordinated efforts with Baylor's human resources to revise the established URA Job Description (JD), as revisions were needed to align duties with the URA model now established by BU's research administration assessment and the URAs Initiative Blueprint. This also offered the opportunity to develop junior and senior level roles, as the development of career ladders and

<sup>134</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 42.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

succession planning had been discussed as part of a "phase two" approach for the Baylor URA model. Once the JDs were reviewed, approved, and posted, the focus turned toward recruitment. Internal reviews of 30+ administrative staff members performing departmental administrative functions were conducted to identify qualified URA candidates from within the university. The author then proceeded with the interviewing process of prospective internal and external candidates.

## **5.2. Project Design and Discussion.**

Once the Baylor URA model's infrastructure had been formulated and staff recruitment had been initiated, efforts were turned toward implementation. Initial roll-out was compromised of:

- Development of policies and procedures and training documentation<sup>136</sup>
- Development and execution of a hiring plan<sup>137</sup>
- Training and onboarding of new staff<sup>138</sup>
- Pilot launch<sup>139</sup>
- Preliminary evaluation<sup>140</sup>

Figure 5.7. depicts an overview of the pilot program rollout via a Venn diagram.

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<sup>136</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 38.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.



Figure 5.7. Pilot Program Roll-out Overview<sup>141</sup>

### 5.2.1. Training and Onboarding.

This phase of implementation was categorized between two types of training: internal and external. Internal training comprises the development of policies and procedures, job aids, and standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the new URA staff. The OVPR further partnered with Huron to complete an on-site training program curriculum and provide continuing education opportunities through access to online tools and resources.<sup>142</sup>

### 5.2.2. Pilot Program.

A "soft roll-out" of the URA model was launched by selecting a pilot unit to "test" the model, rather than implementing a "big bang" roll-out. The School of Engineering and Computer Science (ECS) was selected as the pilot unit for the following reasons:

- ECS has the second largest portfolio of externally funded research (behind the College of Arts & Sciences).<sup>143</sup>
- No departmental FTE (dedicated or fragmented) existed to support research activities.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>141</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 38.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

- Faculty and school leadership voiced strong support for the URA model.<sup>145</sup>
- Key focus area of the institution's strategic plan, resulting in many new faculty hires who were new to research.<sup>146</sup>

### **5.3. Discussion of Questionnaire.**

A questionnaire was not used for this Capstone Project.

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<sup>145</sup> Delilah Flores-Rivera, Kevin Cook, and Lianne Seyferth, "Aligning Mission with Support: How Research Institutions Are Transforming the Research Delivery Model," in *21st Annual Financial Research Administration Conference*, San Juan, PR: NCURA FRA, 2020, 37.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

## **Chapter 6. Project Results and Discussion**

The identified candidate for the Assistant Vice Provost for Research (AVPR), URAs, started her role at BU during the spring semester of 2019 (academic year 2018–2020). For the remainder of the spring semester, the URA AVPR efforts were focused on learning Baylor’s culture and partnering with Huron in formulating the URA department infrastructure, as the compiled research administration assessment had been presented. JD revisions were completed by the start of the summer semester of 2019. Recruitment efforts began at the start of the new FY, June 2019 (FY 2019). The first URA hire was identified in July 2019: a senior level internal candidate for the pilot launch school (ECS). The initial version of the R&R matrix was available by May 2019. It had undergone a few minor revisions, and by the fall of 2019 (academic year 2019–2020), the current rendition was complete. The completion of the URAs Initiative Blueprint and SLA also occurred within the fall of 2019. Ten of the slotted 11 FTEs were filled by the spring semester of 2020. Initially, the spring 2020 semester was geared toward intensive research administration 101 training and preparing for the June 2020 go-live of the Oracle Cloud system, known as Ignite. However, our focus changed toward implementing contingency plans due to the coronavirus pandemic. Chapter 7 will discuss how the pandemic impacted the "standing up" of the URA model at BU.

### **6.1. Project Result 1.**

Metrics have a multitude of functionalities. In this context, they have been utilized as KPIs and assist in workload and bandwidth assessment. Metrics are even utilized to determine rankings (e.g. the Carnegie Mellon University rankings). The author believes

that project results would be best provided through actual metrics from Baylor Research:

External research expenditures—Since FY 2013, Baylor Research expenditures have experienced steady growth, as depicted within Chart 6.2. BU R&D Expenditures FY 2013–2020. In FY 2020, Baylor’s research expenditures totaled \$16,313,989, which exceeded its stretch goal of \$14M but also far exceeded the goal of \$12.5M.<sup>147</sup>

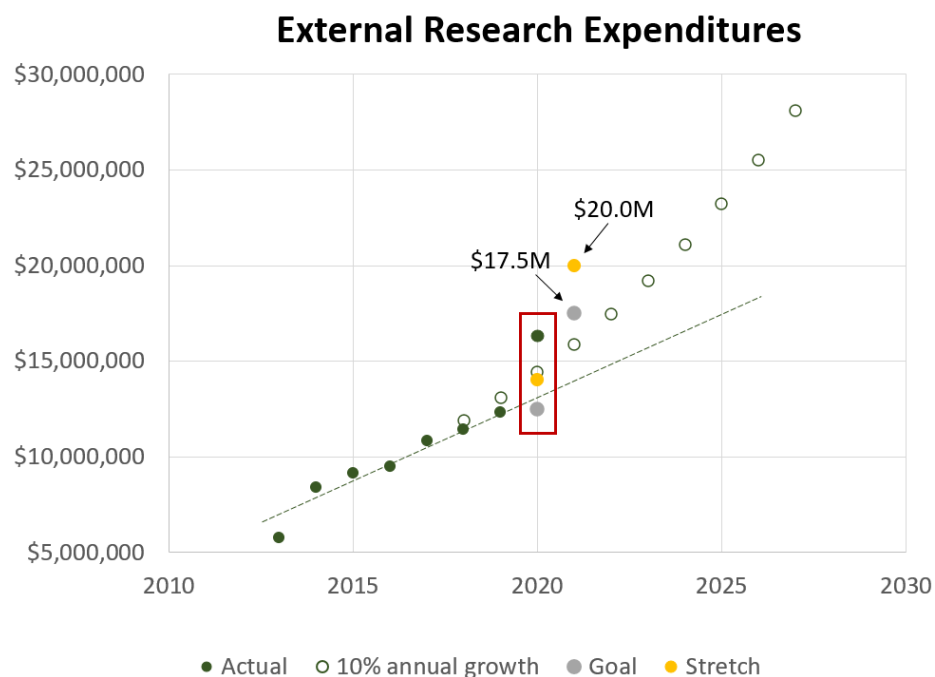


Chart 6.2. BU R&D Expenditures FY 2013–2020<sup>148</sup>

Proposal submissions—In FY 2020, Baylor Research had 476 proposal submissions, an increase of 113 (or 31%) since FY 2019. Chart 6.3. depicts BU Proposal Submissions from FY 2013–2020 via a scatter plot.<sup>149</sup>

<sup>147</sup> Kevin Chambliss and Cindy Todd, “Research Goals” (Waco, TX: Baylor University Office of the Vice Provost for Research, 2020), 2.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 3.

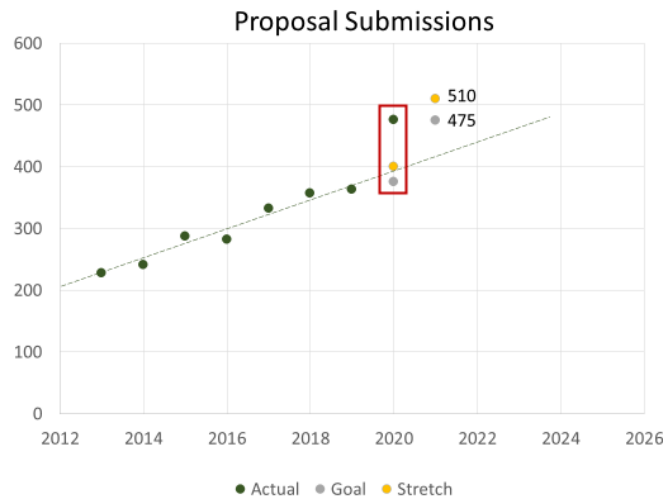


Chart 6.3. BU Proposal Submissions FY 2013–2020<sup>150</sup>

Research award dollars—In FY 2020, Baylor Research experienced its highest amount of research award dollars to date of \$28,345,912, with a 92% (or \$13,553,674) surge from FY 2018 to FY 2020,<sup>151</sup> as reflected within Chart 6.4. BU New Awards Modifications FY 2013–2020.

<sup>150</sup> Kevin Chambliss and Cindy Todd, “Research Goals” (Waco, TX: Baylor University Office of the Vice Provost for Research, 2020), 3.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 5.



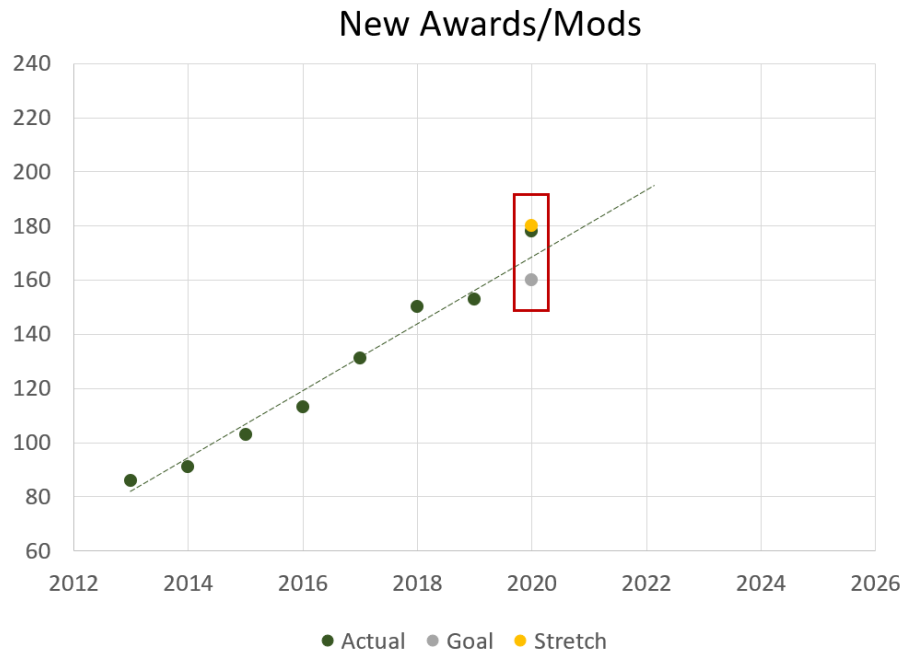


Chart 6.4. BU New Awards and Modifications FY 2013–2020<sup>152</sup>

Sponsor program expenditures—From FY 2019 to FY 2020, Baylor Research experienced a \$4M increase in sponsored program expenditures (a 32.5% increase within one FY),<sup>153</sup> as reflected within Chart 6.5. Research Award Dollars FY 2013–2020.

<sup>152</sup> Kevin Chambliss and Cindy Todd, “Research Goals” (Waco, TX: Baylor University Office of the Vice Provost for Research, 2020), 4.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 6.



Chart 6.5. Research Award Dollars FY 2013–2020<sup>154</sup>

Sponsored program awards—Figure 6.8. BU Sponsored Program Expenditures and Awards FY 2019 and FY 2020 reflects another significant metric that occurred within just one FY. In FY 2020, Baylor Research experienced a 56.3% increase in sponsored program awards, from \$18.1M in FY 2019 to \$28.3M in FY 2020.<sup>155</sup>

<sup>154</sup> Kevin Chambliss and Cindy Todd, “Research Goals” (Waco, TX: Baylor University Office of the Vice Provost for Research, 2020), 5.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 6.

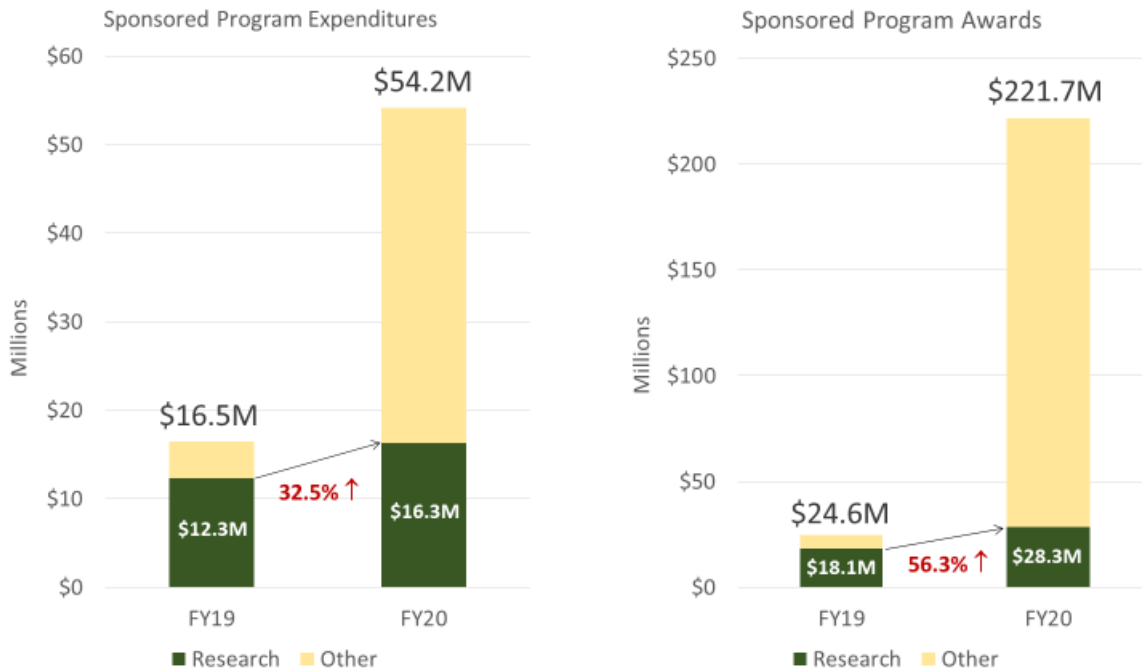


Figure 6.8. BU Sponsored Program Expenditures and Awards FY 2019 and FY 2020<sup>156</sup>

The metrics depicted:

- Support the value-add of the URA model at BU. While the author understands there is a wide range of contributing factors, one can also surmise that in-scope URA responsibilities such as:
  - Assist with developing the administrative components of a proposal, e.g. a budget, budget justification, biosketches.
  - Coordinate the routing and submission process with the pre-award office.
  - Serve as the primary liaison between PIs and the pre-award office, ensure timeliness in submissions, and communicate internal and external deadlines.

<sup>156</sup> Kevin Chambliss and Cindy Todd, "Research Goals" (Waco, TX: Baylor University Office of the Vice Provost for Research, 2020), 6.

can be viewed as contributing factors. This refined faculty service delivery model's goal was to allow faculty members to put increased focus on the technical aspects of their research, rather than dedicating a significant portion of their time to administrative duties.

- Support the likeliness of BU achieving its R1 status. This is because, as discussed within Section 1.1. Background, R&D expenditures are a significant measure within the Carnegie Mellon rankings.

## 6.2. Project Result 2.

Key lessons learned through the initial implementation of the URA model at BU include:

1. **Support from leadership is crucial.** Maintaining visionary alignment across all levels of leadership at Baylor was fundamental to the successful implementation, including support from individuals like the President, Provost and Chief Business Officer.
2. **Be cognizant of institutional impact.** Change is never easy, especially when the implemented change will result in significant changes to the existing culture.
3. **Rebranding as “Research Services” to improve awareness.** Messaging the URA model as what it truly is, a Shared Service, helped to remove the stigma of the scarlet letter “A” for Administration and encourage campus faculty and staff to readily work with the new team.
4. **Involve collaborating offices.** The URA model is a shared service. Furthermore, it is a customer service-oriented role that will work closely with central offices (e.g. pre- and post-award administration). Include collaborating

offices in the process and seek their advice and input. For example, this paper's author involved leadership from other VPR offices in the interviewing process during the URA recruitment phase.

5. **Co-location strengthens buy-in and collaboration.** It was a very intentional decision to have the URAs "live" within the colleges and schools they supported. This model should not have been viewed as another added layer of administrative burden and/or red tape. The URAs were to be viewed as "belonging" to more than just central office; they are a part of the school and college. Therefore, a team mentality was fostered, rather than an us (programmatic) vs. them (administrative) mentality.
6. **Assess the current talent pool.** Far too often, when institutional assessments are conducted, a sense of fear or panic can ensue with existing staff. Rather than promote this concern, leverage the opportunity to identify qualified candidates from within the organization. These individuals possess the invaluable knowledge of the institutional culture, an experience that external candidates do not have.
7. **Be intentional with hiring and placement.** When screening candidates for the URA role, the ideal candidate possessed a mix of both extensive research administration experience and strong customer service skills. As these types of candidates were difficult to find, it was important to then identify individuals with skills not easily captured on a resume (flexibility, a willingness to learn, and think outside the box). By screening for these types of skillsets, Baylor was able to identify individuals who may not have fit the typical mold for this role but have nonetheless proven successful. As the URA team continued to expand, Baylor

was able to assign new URAs to Colleges and Schools by personality and fit, rather than just by open slots, in order to better align the URA resource with the culture of the school or department they were to serve.

## **Chapter 7. Recommendations and Discussion**

### **7.1. Introduction.**

The lessons learned within Chapter 6 were gained as the URA model was being formulated and while the department was in its initial implementation phase. The author believes the coronavirus pandemic likely provided the greatest level of insight by bringing infrastructural gaps to light.

### **7.2. Recommendations.**

On Tuesday, March 24, 2020, BU OVPR began working remotely due to the coronavirus pandemic. On June 1, 2020, BU went live with its Oracle Cloud system. Throughout this period, the author experienced a URA team member's resignation, which forced another phase of recruitment efforts sooner than ever anticipated during a time of campus de-densification and remote working. The cumulation of these events and factoring in that 90% of the URA team were "green" to research administration leads us to the following recommendations.

#### **7.2.1. Recommendation 1. BU OVPR Should Develop a Contingency Plan to Deal with Rapid Adjustments to the Work Environment.**

While the author, along with the global population, can hope there is no repeat of the current pandemic, it gave pause for whether the department was prepared to conduct "business as usual." The URA department was fortunate to have been established with remote capabilities, allowing for better service to be provided to its customer base, but there were some stops gaps. How do you sustain visibility in a remote environment? How do we facilitate training? How do you support professional development without conference travel? Are the current systems able to support a

remote environment and allow little to no interruption with the promised delivery of services?

#### **7.2.2. Recommendation 2. The AVPR of the URAs Should Refine Procedures to Support Ongoing Technology Initiatives.**

Going live with one uniformed, university-wide cloud system did coincide well with being remote. However, it did allow the author to discover that the KPIs listed within the SLA could not be properly captured without an appropriate Enterprise Research Administration (ERA) system.

#### **7.2.3. Recommendation 3. The AVPR of the URAs Should Develop a Formalized Onboarding and Training Plan.**

Have a centralized repository of resources and established business process maps. Consider video recording key training topics for future reference of current and/or newly onboarded staff. Create a toolkit and think contingency planning. The author would have also established a three-phase training plan:

- Phase 1—Big picture
- Phase 2—Research administration 101
- Phase 3—Connect and execute

#### **7.2.4. Recommendation 4. The AVPR of the URAs Should Evaluate a Phased Roll-out, Rather Than "Big Bang," of R&R.**

When initial recruitment efforts began, discussions were held regarding the order of which colleges and schools were to be the recipient of an assigned URA. In this remote environment, the author realized that a phased roll-out of job duties should also be



implemented. For example, in Chapter 4, the overview of functions provided by the URA was discussed:

- Pre-award
- Post-award
- HR and finance
- Procurement

URA job duties should have been rolled out by each function to allow the team to establish a routine, which is vital in these roles, and allow them to "master" each function before transitioning onto the next.

#### **7.2.5. Recommendation 5. The AVPR of the URAs Should Assess the Metrics.**

Go beyond the math when determining reporting structures as well as workload. The author learned that more senior roles were required sooner than planned, as having 11 direct reports is not feasible or sustainable while still trying to build up an entirely new department and its evolving infrastructure. The author also discovered the intangibles that were not factored in (e.g. portfolio complexity) when a combination of quantitative analysis and qualitative feedback informed the FTE headcount. There are aspects of the role that are not based on statistics alone.

## **Chapter 8: Conclusion**

Based upon Huron's research administration assessment and Illuminate, which charts the course toward R1, the author of this Capstone Project fully supports the implementation of a shared services model at BU. The author understands that BU's URA model is not a "one-size-fits-all" model. Individual assessments would need to be conducted to determine each institution's rendition of an implemented shared service. As research administration continues to evolve in its complexity, the author believes the hybrid research delivery model is on course to becoming a functional offering model, along with known current models such as cradle-to-grave or specialization, within research administration.

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## **Appendix 1: Huron: Baylor University Research Administration Assessment**

# BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

Research Administration Assessment  
Summary Report  
January 2019





# FIVE SIGNATURE ACADEMIC INITIATIVES

Health

Data Sciences

Material Science

Human Flourishing,  
Leadership &  
Ethics

Baylor in Latin  
America

## Four Foundational Pillars



Unambiguously  
Christian Educational  
Environment



Transformational  
Undergraduate  
Education



**Research and  
Scholarship  
Marked by  
Quality, Impact,  
and Visibility**



Nationally Recognized  
Programs in Human  
Performance through  
the Arts and Athletics

## R1: Strategic Vision and Implementation Plan

Priority Research  
Areas of Emphasis

Faculty Recruitment,  
Retention and  
Recognition

Facilities and Space

Financial  
Plan

Administrative and  
Operational Support

# SUMMARY REPORT

## GROWTH OF RESEARCH ENTERPRISE



Illuminate: Strategic Plan



R1 Carnegie Classification



In the Spring of 2018, Baylor University launched the “Illuminate” Strategic Plan, with Research and Scholarship as one of the plan’s foundational pillars.

Baylor also aspires to achieve national recognition with the R1 Carnegie Classification, which is determined by R&D expenditures, science and engineering research staff, and doctoral conferrals.



# SUMMARY REPORT

## RESEARCH STRATEGIC PLAN

Research strategy is a series of interrelated choices that aligns Baylor University on key priorities and the allocation of scarce resources.



# SUMMARY REPORT

## ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Huron partnered with Baylor University to evaluate the institution's research administration operations, including pre-award, post-award, and compliance activities, to determine if the operations are adequately aligned to enable effective management of sponsored award activity and will position Baylor for continued growth.

### Objectives

- Improve service and support to Baylor's Principal Investigators,
- Improve organizational structure alignment,
- Clarify individual roles and responsibilities,
- Mitigate compliance risk,
- Optimize the efficiency and effectiveness of current resources, and
- Identify core performance measures to be enhanced or developed to improve research administration management.

### Areas for Review



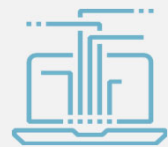
**Customer Service**



**Organizational Effectiveness**



**Roles & Responsibilities**



**Compliance Risk**



**Resource Effectiveness**



**Performance Metrics**

# SUMMARY REPORT

## ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Based on similar engagements, our team used the following commonly accepted pillars of administrative efficiency and effectiveness that dictate an organization's operations to guide our engagement approach. While the interplay of these pillars is specific to each organization, in general they include:

- A. **Organization and People**, including structural alignment, clarification of roles and responsibilities, and effectiveness of resources and the training programs used to support them
- B. The **Business Processes** that support research administration and mitigate compliance risk
- C. The impact of **Services and Support** to Baylor's Principle Investigators
- D. The **Technologies** employed in conducting research administration
- E. **Performance Measurement and Quality Improvement** to improve research administration management in order to inform operational and strategic decisions



We have tailored our approach to focus attention on organizational structure and people, business processes, performance improvement, and customer service to faculty. The recommendations that we provide in our final report will be centered around these five pillars.

# SUMMARY REPORT

## ENGAGEMENT SCOPE

To meet project objectives, Huron:

Conducted a **project kick-off** meeting with Research Administration leadership to confirm project objectives.

Conducted targeted **interview sessions\*** with key stakeholders, including 21 Research Administration leadership, management, and staff members and 24 center, school, and department administration leaders and staff.

Reviewed **documents\*\*** provided by the OVPR including organizational charts, policies, procedures, forms, and performance data.

Reviewed research accounting **business processes** in relation to industry best practices.

\* Appendix B – Interview Participant List


\*\* Appendix C – Client Provided Document List

The end result was a detailed assessment with recommendations for improvement.



# SUMMARY REPORT

## ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

 <b>Baylor University Project Timeline</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	18
	10/1/2018	10/8/2018	10/15/2018	10/22/2018	10/29/2018	11/5/2018	11/12/2018	11/19/2018	11/26/2018	12/3/2018	12/10/2018	12/17/2018	12/24/2018	12/31/2018	01/07/2019	01/14/2019	01/21/2019
Assesment																	
Establish Project Governance																	
Steering Committee Meetings																	
Data Request																	
Interviews																	
Assesment and Analysis																	
Deliver Final Report																	

# SUMMARY REPORT

## OBSERVATIONS

Huron identified several overarching themes aligned with the key pillars of review. These themes will help to provide context to the overall evaluations and recommendations.

### Organizational Effectiveness



- The OVPR has a significant number of personnel across many functional areas supporting research managing a relatively small research volume, indicating an overinvestment in personnel.
- Certain compliance functions can be realigned to better manage institutional risk.
- Opportunities exist to realign pre- and post-award functions and improve processes and communications within OSP and Grants Accounting.
- Coordination between the pre and post-award functions is a pervasive challenge and roles and responsibilities and business processes should be updated.
- Centers and Institutes under the OVPR should be evaluated for designation, purpose, and organizational placement.
- Clarity is needed regarding the support provided by the Office of University Development and the Office of Government Relations, and roles and responsibilities with the OVPR and these offices should be determined and documented.

### Service and Support



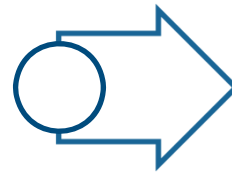
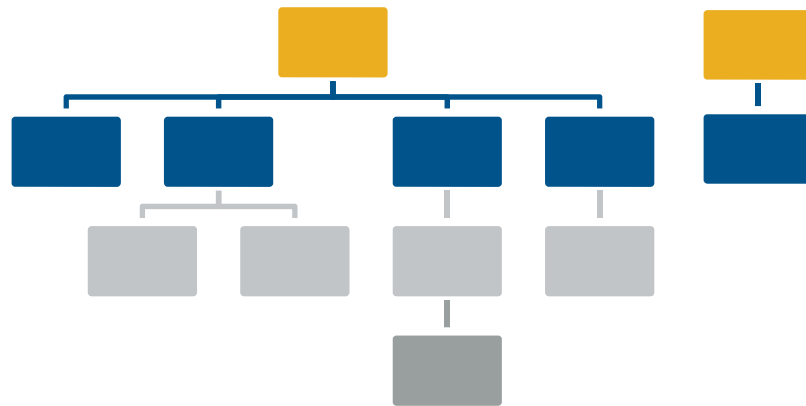
- Many faculty were unaware of the services being provided by the OVPR.
- Faculty provided feedback regarding the inconsistent level of support provided across pre and post-award functions.
- Faculty were cautiously optimistic about the creation of the University Research Administrators role, but expressed questions and concerns regarding how these resources would be managed and deployed.

# SUMMARY REPORT

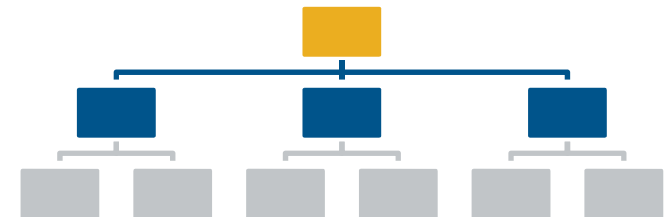
## ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

We identified opportunities for realignment in each functional area and recommend a re-envisioning of the research administration enterprise.

**Current State**



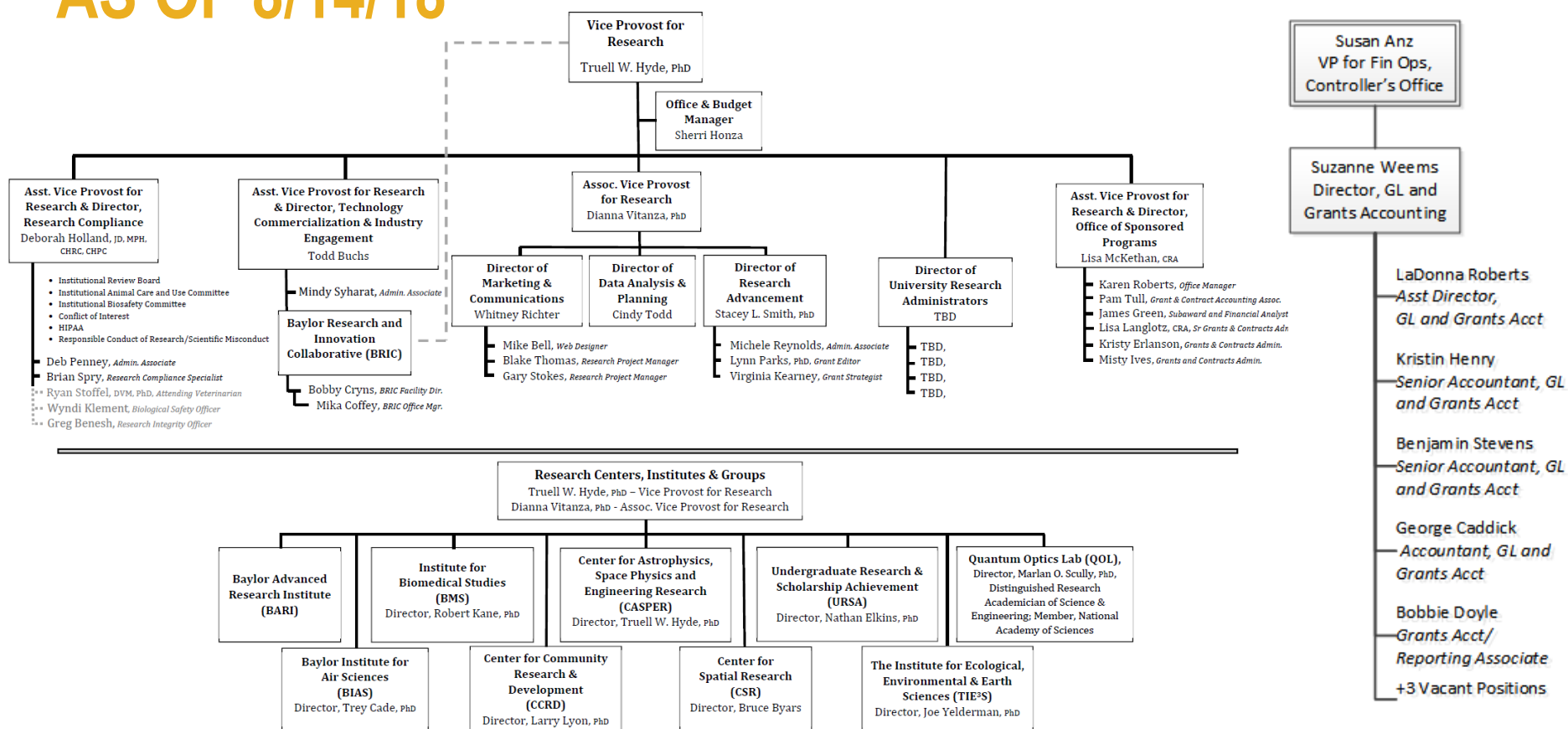
**Future State**



# SUMMARY REPORT

## ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS –

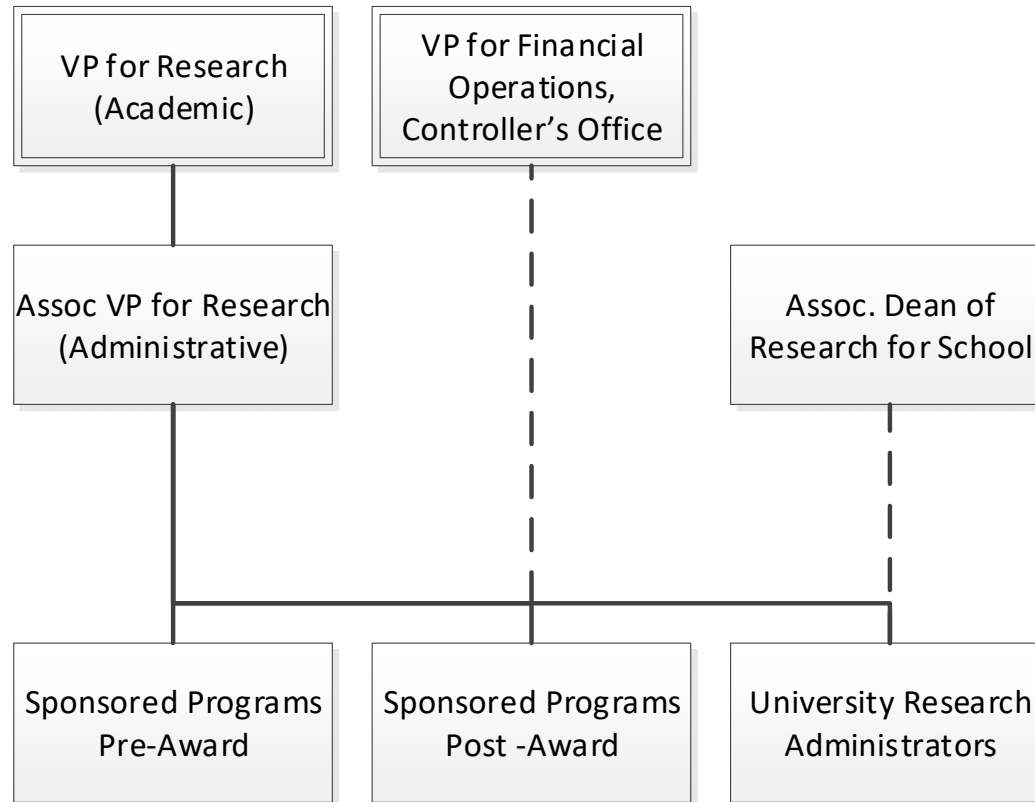
### AS OF 8/14/18





# SUMMARY REPORT

## ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS – FUTURE

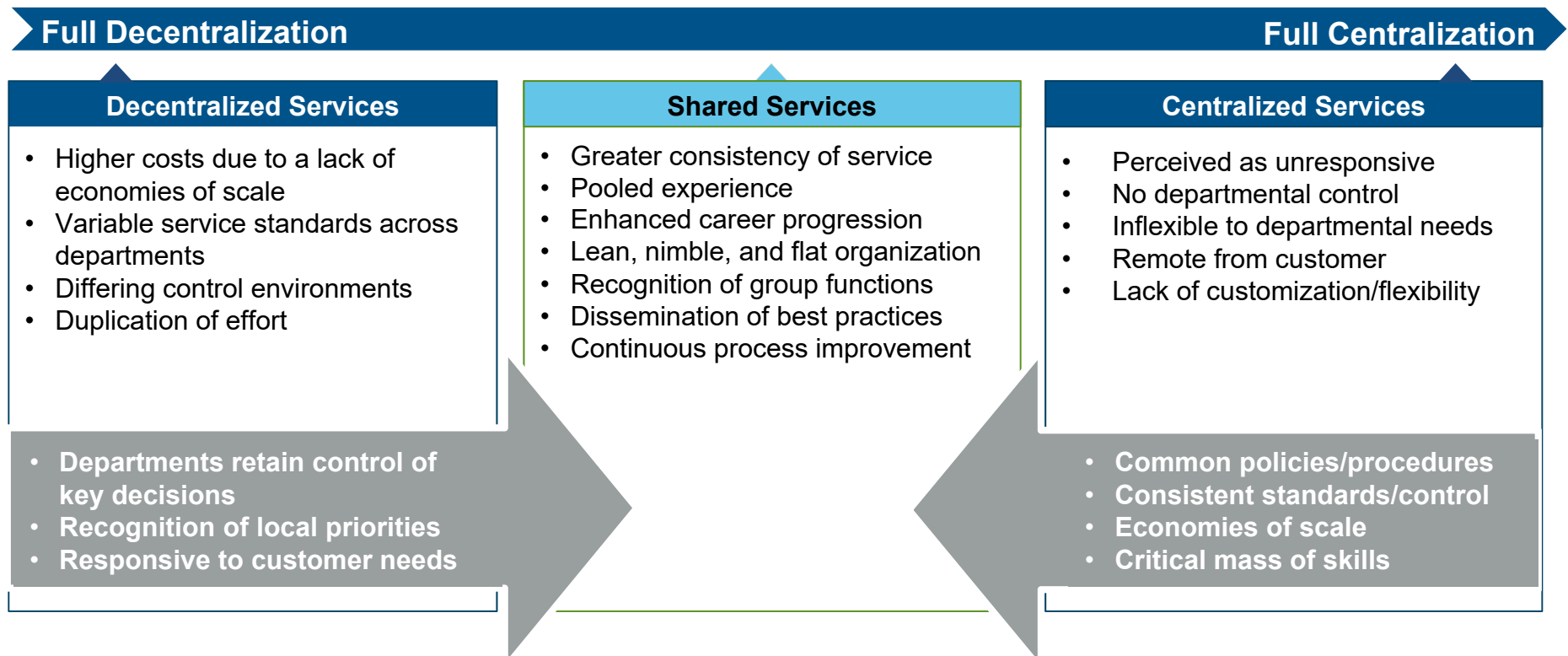


- Titles are for illustrative purposes only and are not intended as recommendations
- The above chart is intended solely to provide recommendations for realignment in pre-award, post-award, and faculty service delivery.

# SUMMARY REPORT

## FACULTY SERVICE DELIVERY

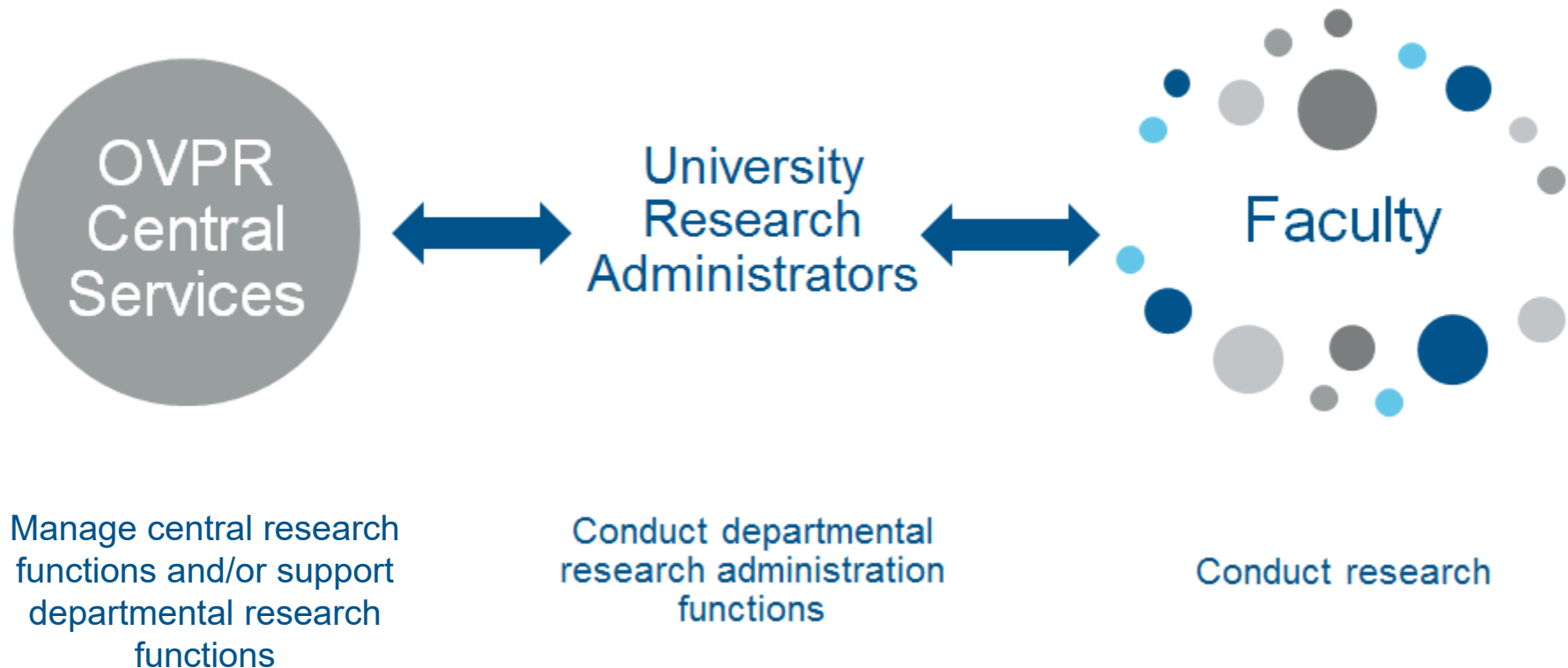
Baylor should implement a refined model of faculty service delivery as part of the University Research Administrators function to ensure consistent and effective research administration support across all departments. A shared service model is a scalable approach to faculty service delivery that is readily adaptable to increases in research volume.



# SUMMARY REPORT

## FACULTY SERVICE DELIVERY

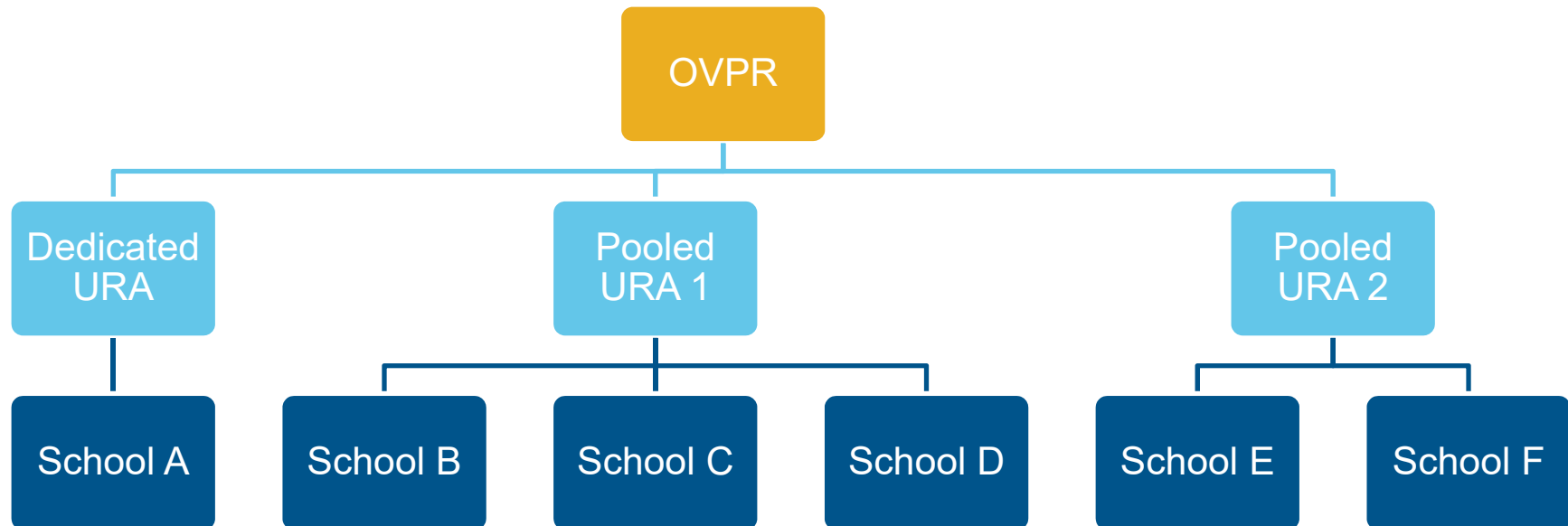
The University Research Administrators will serve as the day-to-day support for a faculty's research activity.



# SUMMARY REPORT

## FACULTY SERVICE DELIVERY

A shared service model will permit schools that are able to support full-time research administrators to maintain their dedicated staff, while establishing a pool of qualified resources to serve the schools and departments with limited to no personnel.



# SUMMARY REPORT

## OBSERVATIONS

### People



- Skills and expertise varied across individuals managing critical compliance driven processes.
- Training is done in an ad hoc manner with little or no documentation to serve as reference.
- Interviewees indicated an overall satisfaction with the mission and direction of the OVPR, but are eager to expand the research footprint as has been discussed over the past several years with little to no result.
- Leadership and faculty highlighted challenges with balancing teaching and research objectives which has resulted in the inability to conduct research.
- Chemistry's model to reward receiving external funding with a reduction in teaching load was spoken highly of by faculty across Baylor.
- Conducting research is a requirement for tenure tracked faculty but obtaining externally funded research is not, though is implied for some departments.
- Seasoned teaching faculty hold a perception that it will be difficult to enter or re-enter the research arena without recent research experience, though with appropriate support would be willing.

### Business Processes and Policies



- Many processes have redundant approvals, resulting in an unnecessary increase in workload, delayed service to faculty, and dispersion of accountability.
- There is a lack of delegated signature authority within OSP, resulting in increased burdens placed on the Office of General Counsel and the Provost and delays in approvals.
- A lack of documented policies and procedures hamper the ability to deliver higher quality service to faculty, reduce compliance risk, and enhance transparency.
- Service centers are not inventoried, rate setting review and approval process is not regularly managed, and the reimbursement process is not efficient.

# SUMMARY REPORT

## OBSERVATIONS

### Performance Measurement



- Increased coordination and collaboration is needed between the teams that collect and manage performance metrics data. Current business practices are misaligned resulting in the potential for duplicate or inconsistent information being provided.
- There are opportunities to develop reports to monitor performance, increase accountability, and manage risk mitigation, such as award setup time, billing progress, overspending detail, and A/R management.

### Technology



- A variety of systems and manual trackers which are not integrated are utilized to manage the research enterprise, resulting in additional manual processing challenges for faculty and administrative staff.
- There is no Research IT Roadmap that outlines the planned approach for research system support.
- There are no plans to implement an effort reporting or pre-award system, which will result in the continuation or design of manual processes.
- Leadership should evaluate new technology systems to reduce manual processing, improve service to campus, and better monitor risk.

# SUMMARY REPORT

## HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION AREAS

The following recommendation areas have the potential for a high impact on improving Baylor's Research Administration operations.

Overview	Priority	High-Level Recommendations
Realign OVPR and Controller's Office	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement organizational realignment of groups that support the research administration enterprise</li> </ul>
Establish Service Delivery for Faculty	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine and implement service delivery model for faculty support, considering the University Research Administrators and existing departmental support</li> </ul>
Draft and Update Policies, Procedures, and Training	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritize and develop policies, procedures, and training materials for current state and with Oracle Cloud</li> </ul>
Develop High Priority Metrics Dashboard	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a metrics dashboard with key performance indicators that can be used by leadership and management to monitor performance and risk</li> </ul>
Develop Research IT Roadmap	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Research IT Roadmap to address system support for the growing research base and the Oracle Cloud implementation</li> </ul>
Build Research Strategic Plan	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build a fact-based research strategic plan that informs future strategic direction and identifies actions to support advancement (Slides 23 – 25)</li> </ul>

# SUMMARY REPORT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following process should be considered as Baylor prepares to move forward with implementation:



1.	Obtain consensus to proceed with the implementation of a prioritized list of recommendations.
2.	Develop a “100 Day Plan” to make near-term improvement in critical areas. This would outline the key priorities, goals, and measurements for progress. While this implementation could take 9 - 12 months, it is important to develop and communicate interim milestones in the most critical areas.
3.	Develop communication plan that includes the notification sequence for changes of those impacted and content for any distributions.
4.	Develop a project model that will ensure effective coordination among key initiatives. This will include identifying a Project Manager to partner with the Steering Committee and implementation team and to which the implementation team can be accountable, identifying drivers and champions for these initiatives, and assessing the availability and skill set of resources to implement these initiatives.
5.	Develop summary and individual work plans for those areas considered highest priority; plans should describe more specific tasks, responsibilities, timelines and deliverables, metrics to measure progress, and identify necessary resources.



## **Appendix 2: University Research Administrators Initiative Blueprint**

# University Research Administrators Initiative Blueprint

FALL 2019



BAYLOR  
UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE VICE PROVOST  
FOR RESEARCH

patents  
data analytics  
research advancement  
technology commercialization  
sponsored programs

research

industry engagement

internal funding

proposal development

industry collaboration

research compliance

research marketing & communication

rese@rch  
baylor

MAKING A  
DIFFERENCE

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Allocation and Deployment of  
Resources

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Governance

# Project Overview

# Project Overview

## Aligning Baylor Mission with Support

Baylor leadership and faculty have widespread support for the university mission and the core components of the Illuminate Strategic Plan. It has, however, been noted that the lack of consistent administrative support is inhibiting the ability to prepare, submit, and manage growing research activity.



Unambiguously  
Christian  
Educational  
Environment



Transformational  
Undergraduate  
Education



Research and  
Scholarship  
Marked by  
Quality, Impact,  
and Visibility



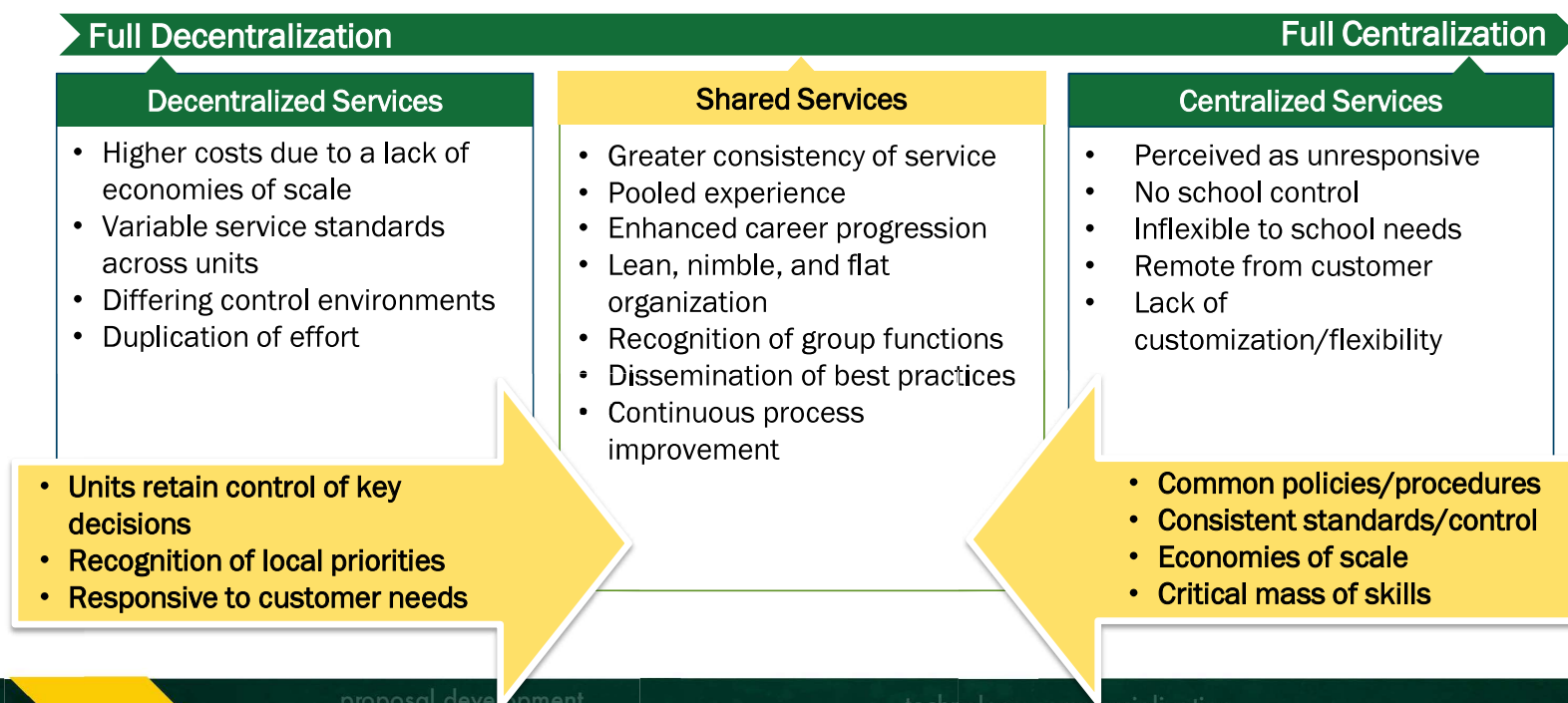
Nationally  
Recognized  
Programs in Human  
Performance  
through the Arts  
and Athletics

**Solution: Align resources. Work more efficiently. Provide consistent service.**

# Project Overview

## Faculty Service Delivery Goals


Baylor is implementing a refined model for faculty service delivery as part of the University Research Administrators (URA) to ensure consistent and effective research administration support across all units.



# Project Overview

## URA Scope

Local research administration activities across the following schools, colleges, and units are considered “in scope” for the URA function.

Functional Area	Schools, Colleges, and Units	
<b>Local Research Administration</b> 	<b>Schools</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law School</li> <li>• Diana R. Garland School of Social Work</li> <li>• Hankamer School of Business</li> <li>• Louise Herrington School of Nursing</li> <li>• School of Music</li> <li>• School of Education</li> <li>• School of Engineering and Computer Science</li> </ul>	<b>Colleges</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College of Arts and Sciences</li> <li>• Robbins College of Health and Human Sciences</li> <li>• Honors College</li> </ul> <b>Units</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• George W. Truett Theological Seminary</li> <li>• Institute for Studies of Religion</li> <li>• Texas Hunger Initiative</li> <li>• Vice Provost for Research</li> <li>• Academic Affairs</li> <li>• Student Life</li> </ul>

# Project Overview

## Faculty Service Delivery Blueprint

The following blueprint components were conceptualized as a result of interviews conducted with 25+ faculty and staff involved in the day-to-day management of local research administration activities.

Components	Definitions
Service Catalog	Inventory of all in-scope activities to be associated with the URA team.
Service and Support Model	Roles and responsibilities of the URA team, including points of interaction between the units served and Baylor central offices (i.e. OVPR teams, Controller's Office, Human Resources, Procurement, etc.).
Organizational Model	Reporting relationship of research administration staff supporting the URA team, including the number of proposed full-time equivalents (FTE) to administer all functions of the service catalog.
Allocation and Deployment of Resources	URA model deployment option for staff to specific units under common processes, reporting structures, and leadership.
Governance	The structures and methods to drive accountability for effective faculty service delivery (e.g. committees, service level agreements, key performance indicators, etc.)



# Service Catalog

# Service Catalog

## In Scope URA Responsibilities

### Pre-Award Activities

- Ensure compliance with institutional and sponsor-specific policies
- Assist with the development of the administrative components of a proposal, including budget, budget justification, biosketches, etc.

#### Proposal Development



- Coordinate the routing and submission process with the Pre-Award Office
- Serve as the primary liaison between PIs and the Pre-Award Office, ensure timeliness of submission, and communicate internal and external deadlines

#### Proposal Submission



- Facilitate the communication of award terms and conditions, status of award review (if applicable), and other relevant updates to PIs
- Review awarded budget modifications, compliance documentation, Just-in-Time (JIT) requests, etc.

#### Award Notification



# Service Catalog

## In Scope URA Responsibilities

### Pre-Award Activities

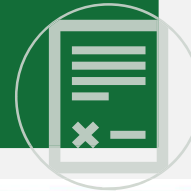
- Support the award set up process in the financial system
- Review the established award in the financial system for accuracy and submit requests to the Pre- and Post-Award Offices, as needed

#### Award Set Up



- Identify the need for a subcontract
- Monitor active subcontracts to ensure programmatic progress and compliance
- Review subcontract invoices for accuracy and address questions regarding payment
- Submit requests to the Pre- and Post-Award Offices for project changes, prior approvals, etc.

#### Subcontract Initiation and Monitoring



- Submit requests for award extensions, revisions, etc. to the Pre- and Post-Award Offices
- Serve as the primary liaison between PIs and the Pre- and Post-Award Offices to ensure timeliness of submission for all relevant documentation and communicate deadlines

#### Award Modifications



# Service Catalog

## In Scope URA Responsibilities

### Post-Award Activities

- Advise PIs and the Post-Award Office of cost share commitments and potential risks
- Monitor and track all cost share commitments through the life of the award to ensure commitments are met

#### Cost Share



- Develop and submit cost transfer requests and documentation in coordination with PIs
- Ensure cost transfers have been correctly processed and follow up with the Post-Award Office as needed

#### Cost Transfers



# Service Catalog

## In Scope URA Responsibilities

### Post-Award Activities

- **Pre-Ignite:** Conduct limited post-audit review of research purchases as a part of monthly reconciliation processes to ensure expenses are allowable and allocable
- **Ignite (tentative):** Including the responsibilities above, conduct up front allowability review (via Ignite) of research purchases >\$5k for catalog purchases and >\$2.5K for non-catalog purchases when initiated

#### Procurement



- **Pre-Ignite:** Review and approve proposed payroll allocations for available budget and allowability
- **Ignite (tentative):** Inform HCM Specialists of payroll allocation changes via email. HCM Specialists will be accountable for processing allocation changes in a timely manner (i.e. before monthly payroll deadlines), per a to-be-defined service level agreement

#### HR Activities



# Service Catalog

## In Scope URA Responsibilities

### Post-Award Activities

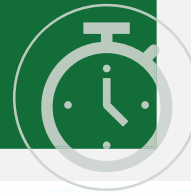
- Generate and review monthly financial reports of all sponsored activities with PIs
- Monitor award budgets to expenses and advise PIs accordingly (e.g. burn rate, budget/expense forecasting, etc.)
- Review grant financials prior to the submission of sponsor-required financial reports

#### Award Balance Monitoring



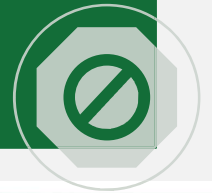
- Communicate effort policies to PIs and research staff, including impact of variances (e.g. >25% effort changes), if they occur
- Partner with PIs to distribute and track the effort reporting and certification process

#### Effort Reporting



- Notify PIs of outstanding residuals and/or deficits and coordinate the closeout process with the Post-Award Office
- Ensure all appropriate expenditures and cost transfers are posted before internal closeout deadlines (e.g. 60-days after an award end date)

#### Award Closeout



# Service Catalog

## In Scope URA Responsibilities

### Post-Award Activities

- **Pre-Ignite:** Provide guidance to PIs regarding the use of designated funds (for payroll and non-payroll expenses) when sponsored accounts are not appropriate
- **Ignite (tentative):** Including the responsibilities above, the Fiscal Officer will inform URAs of faculty funds as they are allocated from the central budgeting unit, URAs to provide guidance to PIs accordingly

### Faculty Funds



# Service Catalog

## Out of Scope URA Responsibilities









### Central OVPR Responsibilities

• Funding opportunity identification	• Communication with sponsoring agency
• Proposal review and approval	• Invoicing and letter of credit (LOC) draws
• Compliance review and approval (e.g. IRB, IACUC, etc.)	• Financial reporting
• Proposal submission to sponsoring agency	• Accounts receivable (A/R) and cash management
• Award acceptance and negotiation	• Research IT systems management
• Contract negotiation and subrecipient review and negotiation	• University audit and survey responses



# Service Catalog

## Illustrative Customer Service Model

Scenario 1: Proposal Development and Submission	 <p>PI</p>	<p><i>"I need help preparing a proposal for submission."</i></p>	 <p>URA</p>	<p><i>"I can help draft the administrative components of the proposal, including budget, justification, and biosketches. I can also help submit the proposal to the Pre-Award Office and communicate directly with them if they request any changes prior to submission."</i></p>
Scenario 2: Award Management	 <p>PI</p>	<p><i>"I need to request a no-cost-extension for my award."</i></p>	 <p>URA</p>	<p><i>"I can prepare and submit all the documentation required to request a NCE with the Pre-Award Office. I will work directly with the Pre- and Post-Award Offices to resolve any issues and ensure that the award is properly extended in the financial system."</i></p>
Scenario 3: Award Balance Monitoring	 <p>PI</p>	<p><i>"I need to know how much money I have on my grant."</i></p>	 <p>URA</p>	<p><i>"I can provide a monthly financial report that outlines current award balances and burn rate. I can also help create a budget forecast for the remaining balance that includes any outstanding encumbrances such as equipment purchases."</i></p>
Scenario 4: Award Closeout	 <p>PI</p>	<p><i>"My study is completed and I am ready to closeout my award."</i></p>	 <p>URA</p>	<p><i>"I can complete a final review and reconciliation of the award to ensure all expenses have been appropriately charged to the account. I will work directly with the Pre- and Post-Award Offices to ensure all relevant closeout documentation is submitted correctly and in a timely manner, including final invoices and financial and technical reports."</i></p>

# Service and Support Model

# Service and Support Model

Envisioning the URA Model

Office of the  
Vice Provost  
for Research



University  
Research  
Administrators



Baylor  
Research  
Faculty



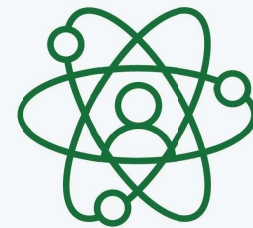
## Responsibilities

Manage central research administration functions and provide decision support to University Research Administrators and Baylor Research Faculty



## Responsibilities

Perform local research administration activities in coordination with the OVPR and support Baylor Research Faculty



## Responsibilities

Conduct research in support of Baylor's strategic vision

# Service and Support Model

## Roles & Responsibilities Matrix: Pre-Award

### Proposal Development

Role	URAs	PI	Research Adv	Pre-Award	Post-Award	Research Compliance	General Counsel	Dev and Corp Rel'n
Search for proposal opportunities	S	P	S					P
Develop proposal - administrative portion, budget, budget justification	P	S	I	I				I
Determine the need for subcontract(s)	S	P		I				
Develop proposal - subcontracts (LOI, SOW, budget, budget justification, Commitment Form)	P	S		I				
Complete Conflict of Interest documentation for proposal	S	P						
Enforce internal submission deadlines	S		I	P				P
Prepare JIT information (Other Support, IRB approval, IACUC approval)	P	S		I		I		
Review proposal information	S		I	P				P
Revise/correct proposal based on review	P	S	I	I				
Review JIT information	S			P				
Revise/correct JIT information based on review	S	P						
Submit JIT information to sponsor	S			P				
Determine the need for feasibility assessment	P							

P=Primary S = Secondary I=Input

# Service and Support Model

## Roles & Responsibilities Matrix: Pre-Award

### Award Acceptance, Subcontracts, and Setup

Role	URA	PI	Pre-Award	Post-Award	Research Compliance	General Counsel
Review final award stipulations for execution	I	I	P		S	I
Notifies the appropriate regulatory office if changes to project scope will affect approved protocols	S				P	
Initiate the preparation of a subcontract	P	I				
Review subcontract compliance information (IRB, IACUC, COI)	I		P		S	
Revise budget based on award amount	I	I	P			
Verify that the award was properly setup	S			P		
Review application / progress report for non-competing continuation	P					
Upload application / progress report for non-competing continuation	P					
Complete compliance information (IRB, IACUC, COI)	P	S				
Review compliance information (IRB, IACUC, COI)	I		P		S*	
Determine the need for new/modified subcontract	P	I	I			
Initiate subcontract documentation (new/modified)	P	I				

P=Primary S = Secondary I=Input

# Service and Support Model

## Roles & Responsibilities Matrix: Post-Award

### Award Modification and Financial Management

Role	URAs	PI	Post-Award	Research Compliance	Controller's Office
Develop carryforward request for approval, if required	P	I			
Initiate request for re-budgeting	P	I			
Initiate request for No Cost Extension (NCE) or other award amendment	P	I			
Review final financial reports for completeness and accuracy	S		P		
Prepare invoices based on sponsor requirements	S		P		
Review final invoices for completeness and accuracy	S		P		
Outgoing Participant Payments	I			I	
Inform PI, URA, Controller's Office, etc. of A/R at risk	I	I	P		I
Prepare final account reconciliation for award closeout	P				
Prepare and submit allowable adjustments or cost transfers	P				
Monitor sponsored programs for overspending	S		P		
Prepare documentation and justification for cost transfers	P	S			

P=Primary S = Secondary I=Input

# Service and Support Model

## Roles & Responsibilities Matrix: Post-Award

### Subrecipient Monitoring and PPM Transaction Management

Role	URAs	PI	Pre-Award	Post-Award	Internal Audit
Create requisition for subrecipient	P				
Process sub invoices for payment (incoming)	P				
Ensure sub invoices (including final) are received	P				
Address subrecipient questions regarding payment of invoices	P				
Report performance issues to central office immediately (VPR and Controller's)	P				
Request back-up documentation from subrecipient per subcontract	P				
Review corrective action plans for subrecipients	I	I	S		P
Maintain documentation of sub monitoring efforts	S		P		
Track current and pending effort commitments	S			P	
Monitor PPM unprocessed transactions	P			S	
Manage unprocessed transactions that must be transferred	P				
Update Expenditure Item date to allow for processing	P				

P=Primary S = Secondary I=Input



# Service and Support Model

## Roles & Responsibilities Matrix: Post-Award

### Procurement Functions: Pre-Ignite

Role	URAs	PI	Post-Award	Central Procurement
Research study team (PI, Post-Doc, etc.) identifies required research supplies/equipment and purchases via P-Card	I	P		
Conduct allowability review of research purchase in accordance with the Uniform Guidance Micro-Purchase Threshold (research purchases >\$10K)	P	I		
Conduct review of research purchases based on current institutional procurement policies (purchases >\$50K reviewed pre-Ignite for bulk buy savings)	I	I		P
Conduct post-audit review of research-related purchases through monthly reconciliation processes	P	I		
Identify cost transfers or adjustments as identified through monthly reconciliation process and initiate correction	P	I	S	

P=Primary S = Secondary I=Input



# Service and Support Model

## Roles & Responsibilities Matrix: Post-Award

### Procurement Functions: Ignite

Role	URAs	Shopper*	Post-Award	Procurement Lead*	Other
Identify research supplies/equipment for purchase (“shops”) via the procurement portal (catalog and non-catalog)	S	P			
Conduct review and approve or disapprove based on institutional procurement policies		I		P	
Submit approved requisitions				P	
Conduct daily review of all submitted research requisitions based on future state institutional policies for research purchases (>\$5K catalog and >\$2.5K non-catalog)	P	I			
Approve or disapprove research requisitions based on allowability, allocability, and reasonableness, also considering available budget and award terms and conditions	P	I			
Conduct post-audit review of research-related purchases through monthly reconciliation processes	P	I			
Identify cost transfers or adjustments as identified through monthly reconciliation process and initiate correction	P	I	S		
Confirm requisitions have been approved, processed, and allocated appropriately	P				

P=Primary S = Secondary I=Input \*New Roles assigned within the system under Ignite

# Service and Support Model

## Roles & Responsibilities Matrix: Post-Award

### HR Functions: Pre-Ignite

Role	URAs	PI	Financial Manager	Central HR	Payroll
Based on monthly PI meetings, identify need for HR changes (e.g. payroll allocations, Post-Doc hiring, etc.) and provide relevant support to inform decision to initiate request	P	S			
Review and approve required HR changes based on allowability, allocability, and reasonableness, also considering available budget and award terms and conditions,	P	I			
Inform Financial Manager of required HR actions specific to research	P	I			
Submit HR requests via Bearquest	I		P		
Conduct secondary review of HR requests and approve or disapprove	I			P	
Process HR changes in system					P
Confirm HR changes have been approved and processed in the system	P			I	

P=Primary S = Secondary I=Input

# Service and Support Model

## Roles & Responsibilities Matrix: Post-Award

### HR Functions: Ignite

Role	URAs	PI	HCM Specialist*	Fiscal Officer*
Based on monthly PI meetings, identify need for HR changes (e.g. payroll allocations, Post-Doc hiring, etc.) and provide relevant support to inform decision to initiate request	P	S		
Review and approve required HR changes based on allowability, allocability, and reasonableness, also considering available budget and award terms and conditions,	P	I		
Route HR requests (e.g. payroll allocations, hiring requests, etc.) to HCM Specialist via email	P			
Complete HR data entry in Oracle Cloud HCM System	I		P	
Conduct review of HR requests and approve or disapprove	I		I	P
Confirm HR changes have been approved and processed in the system	P		I	

P=Primary S = Secondary I=Input \*New Roles assigned within the system under Ignite

# Service and Support Model

## Roles & Responsibilities Matrix: Post-Award

### Faculty Funds Functions: Pre-Ignite

Role	URAs	PI
Based on monthly PI meetings, review all account activity and identify need for use of faculty funds (e.g. F&A rev share, start-ups) when sponsored accounts are not appropriate	P	S

*P=Primary S = Secondary I=Input*

# Service and Support Model

## Roles & Responsibilities Matrix: Post-Award

### Faculty Funds Functions: Ignite

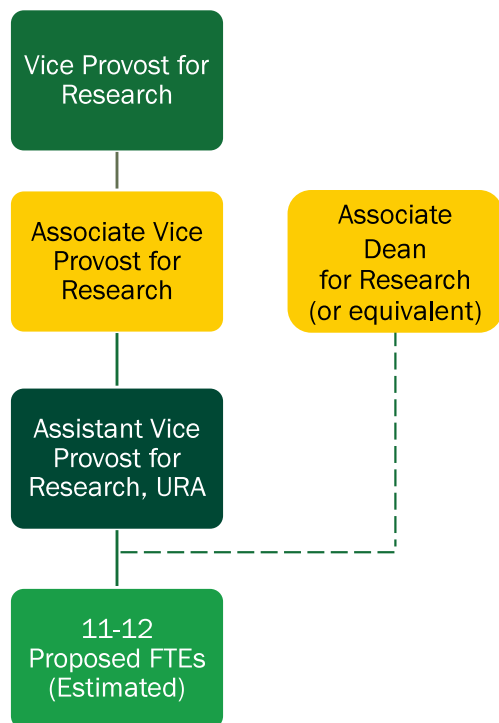
Role	URAs	PI	Fiscal Officer*
Allocate faculty funds from unit to individual departments and PIs			P
Advise URA of faculty fund allocations from unit to individual departments and PIs	I		P
Include faculty funds in PI financial reports	P		
Based on monthly PI meetings, review all account activity and identify need for use of faculty funds (e.g. F&A rev share, start-ups) when sponsored accounts are not appropriate	P	S	

P=Primary S = Secondary I=Input \*New Role assigned within the system under Ignite

# Organizational Model

# Organizational Model

## Future State Reporting Model



### URA Organization

- The Associate Vice Provost will oversee all central research administrative functions of the OVPR, including URA, Pre-Award, Post-Award, Research Compliance, and Data Analysis and Planning.
  - This broad administrative oversight will ensure coordination between URA and other OVPR teams.
- The Assistant Vice Provost, URA reports to the Associate Vice Provost for Research, with a dotted matrix to the Associate Deans for Research for the units supported by the URA model.
  - This dual reporting line will ensure collaboration and accountability between the units served and the VPR's office (see *Governance Committee Guidelines and Escalation Protocol* sections for more information).
- The URA team will report directly to the Assistant Vice Provost for Research, URA.

# Organizational Model

## Proposed FTE Calculation

The proposed URA model suggests an estimated 11-12 FTEs. The FTE headcount is informed by a combination of quantitative analysis and qualitative feedback. The quantitative analysis is based off of Baylor's current research volume, benchmarking data from peer institutions, and industry knowledge of best practices. The qualitative feedback is informed by the feedback received from in-person meetings with 25+ local staff and research faculty.

### Benchmarking Averages

Proposals per FTE	Active Awards per FTE	Research Expenditures per FTE	Active Faculty per FTE
30	25	\$2M	16

### Baylor FY18 Proposal and Award Data

Count of Proposals	Active Awards	Research Expenditures	Active Faculty
357	362	\$15.9M	196

*Calculated FTEs per research volume*

11.9	14.5	7.9	12.3
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Average of calculated FTEs:  
11.7 FTEs



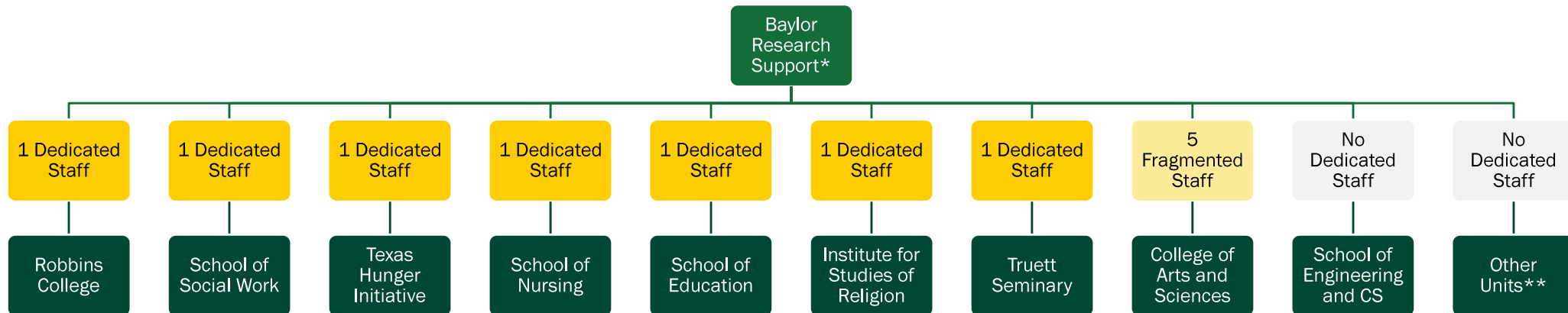
# Allocation and Deployment of Resources

# Allocation and Deployment of Resources

## Current Staff Allocation

The current state allocation is based on the approximate staff\* that currently exist within the units, as determined by the current state assessment. Current gaps in service are also represented.

- Dedicated Staff are assigned to their respective units to support local research administration activities, however, these staff currently only support a portion of the functions defined under the URA service catalog.
- Fragmented Staff are also assigned to their respective units and support a mix of both research and non-research related administrative activities. Of the research-related activities they support, only a portion of these functions are defined under the URA service catalog.



\*Current staff allocations are approximated based on the count of local administrative FTEs supporting research-related administrative tasks within the individual units

\*\*Other Units: Honors College, School of Business, Law School, School of Music, VPR, Academic Affairs, Student Life

# Allocation and Deployment of Resources

## Analysis of Current State Proposal and Award Portfolios

The FTE analysis by unit uses the same benchmarking averages to calculate the number of URA FTEs required (30 proposals, 25 projects, \$2M in research expenditures, and 16 active research faculty).

Unit	Count of Proposals	Active Projects	Research Expenditures	Active Faculty	Calculated FTEs (Proposals)	Calculated FTEs (Projects)	Calculated FTEs (Expenditures)	Calculated FTEs (Faculty)	Calculated FTE (Average)	Current Staff Allocated
Robbins College	30	52	\$0.7M	17	1.0	2.1	0.3	1.1	1.1	1
Social Work	7	12	\$0.4M	7	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.3	1
Truett Seminary	2	6	\$0.2M	4	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.2	1
Nursing	13	15	\$0.9M	6	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.5	1
Education	24	28	\$0.5M	14	0.8	1.1	0.2	0.9	0.8	1
ISR	4	6	\$1M	5	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.3	1
Texas Hunger Initiative	4	16	\$2.3M	0	0.1	0.6	1.2	0.0	0.5	1
Art & Sciences	181	152	\$6.5M	98	6.0	6.1	3.3	6.1	5.4	5*
Engineering & CS	65	45	\$2.6M	28	2.2	1.8	1.3	1.8	1.7	0
All Other Units**	27	30	\$0.8M	17	0.9	1.3	0.4	1.1	0.9	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>\$15.9M</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>12</b>

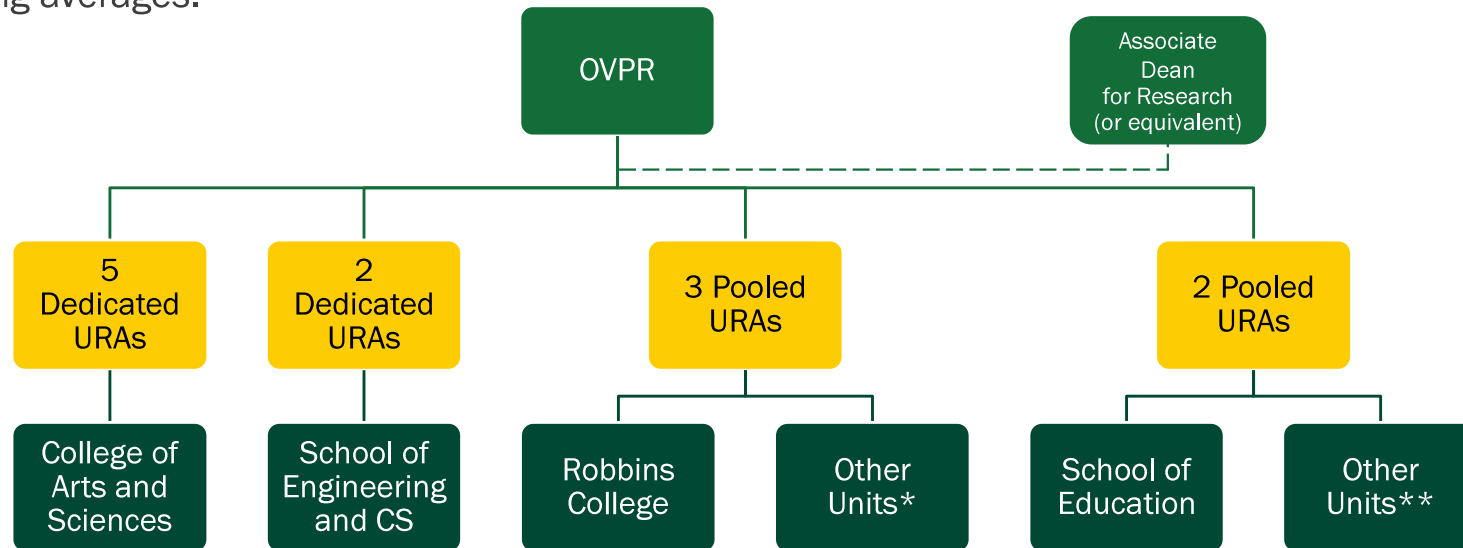
\*Fragmented Staff are currently supporting both research and non-research related administrative functions

\*\*All Other Units Include: School Of Business, Honors College, Law School, School of Music, VPR, Academic Life, Student Affairs

# Allocation and Deployment of Resources

## Allocation by Current Research Volume and Resources

Staff allocation is based on the current pre- and post-award volume in the units, as calculated based on peer benchmarking averages.



\*Other Units: Texas Hunger Initiative, School of Nursing, School of Social Work, Business School, Law School, School of Music

\*\*Other Units: Institute for Studies of Religion, Honors College, Truett Seminary, VPR, Academic Affairs, Student Life

# Allocation and Deployment of Resources

## FTE Allocation Analysis

The average calculated FTE need by unit was determined by considering the aggregate of FTE estimates by proposal, award, research expenditure, and faculty data.

Unit	Proposals	Active Awards	Research Expenditures	Active Faculty	Calculated FTE Need	FTE Allocated
College of Arts & Sciences	181	152	\$6.5M	98	5.4	5
School of Engineering and CS	65	45	\$2.6M	28	1.7	2
Robbins College and Other Units*	62	102	\$4.3M	39	2.7	3
School of Education and Other Units**	49	63	\$2.5M	31	1.9	2

\*Other Units: Texas Hunger Initiative, School of Nursing, School of Social Work, Business School, Law School, School of Music

\*\*Other Units: Institute for Studies of Religion, Honors College, Truett Seminary, VPR, Academic Affairs, Student Life

# Governance

# Governance

## Model Governance

The goal of an effective faculty service delivery model is to create accountability to the colleges, schools, and units being supported by the URA model and to align oversight with consistent performance standards.

Necessary Inputs for a Successful Faculty Service Delivery Model	
Governance Committee(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprised of Associate Deans for Research and select research faculty that interact with the URA model</li> <li>Meet quarterly to review the unit against the service level agreement (SLA)</li> </ul>
Service Level Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defines the services and deliverables that will be provided and the performance standards that can be expected of the unit</li> </ul>
Satisfaction Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish baseline and assess relative end-user attitudes toward local research administration services</li> <li>Issued frequently (e.g. quarterly) after go live, then annually</li> </ul>
Research Faculty/URA Staff Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal feedback loops</li> <li>Helps identify problems early on</li> </ul>
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measurable benchmarks that can track progress over time</li> <li>Ensures workload consistency</li> <li>Informs business need for staffing levels</li> </ul>

# Governance

## Governance Committee Guidelines

An identified group of research leaders may serve on a governing body for the model. Their responsibilities include:

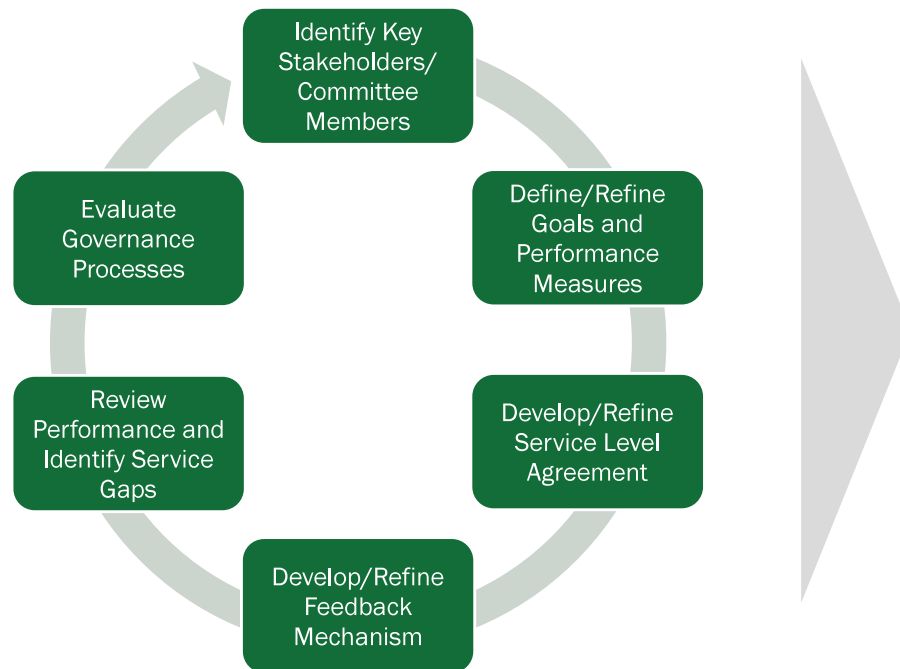
- Advocate for service levels
- Review Service Level Agreement (SLA) compliance
- Review Key Performance Indicator (KPI) progress
- Review satisfaction survey results and make recommendations for improvement
- Support an environment of continuous process improvement
- Help prioritize areas for investment in service improvement
- Support resolution of customer service gaps



# Governance

## Governance Committee Guidelines

The following is a sample approach for developing the URA governance model.



### URA Governance Committee Charge

- Develop and review multi-year operational and service level goals
- Review compliance with service level agreement
- Review progress of key performance indicators
- Review customer satisfaction feedback
- Support an environment of continuous process improvement
- Support resolution of customer service gaps

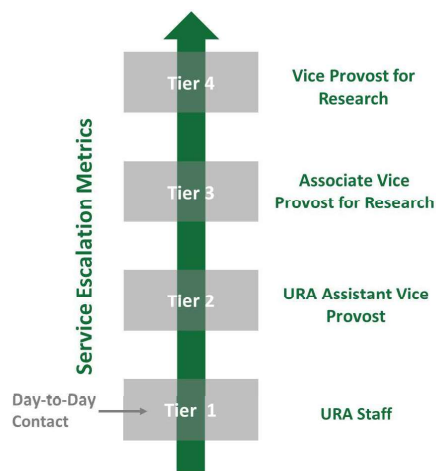
# Governance

## Escalation Protocols

The Governance Committee will review performance and identify service gaps for the expectations of the URA unit to ensure all parties are fulfilling the requirements outlined by the service level agreement.

### If Faculty are Not Receiving Adequate Service

- If faculty do not receive adequate service from URA staff they will follow the escalation matrix below to resolve the problem.



### If Unit Needs Expedited Service or Issue Resolution

- In the event that customers require “emergency” service (turnaround in less time than outlined in the SLA) they will immediately communicate the need to their assigned staff to determine how the task can be expeditiously handled.
- These instances should be exceptions and not the standard for service.
- The Governance Committee will continuously review these exceptions in performance to decide if a mitigation or performance plan needs to be put in place to re-establish service levels.

# Governance

## Service Level Agreement (SLA)

The standards for the URA unit's performance will be grounded in an SLA. This agreement will represent an agreed upon service expectation for those receiving service and those providing service.

### The purpose of the Service Level Agreement is to:

- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Define the services and deliverables that will be provided and the performance standards that can be expected
- Provide an overview of mutual requirements and expectations for processes
- Communicate the expected value of the function
- Define how performance will be measured to mitigate future operational risk (e.g. workload capacity due to research growth)

### Sample Service Level Agreement

Process	Service Center Responsibilities	PI/ Department Responsibilities
Proposal Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Manages Proposal Development and Submission Checklist.</li><li>• Assists in development of budget, budget justification, biosketches, etc.</li><li>• Compiles all administrative components of proposal.</li><li>• Contacts proposed subcontractors to gather required proposal components.</li><li>• Drafts Letter of Intent, if applicable.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dept. Chair approves proposed cost sharing.</li><li>• PI alerts Service Center Grants Administrator of their intent to propose at least four weeks in advance of sponsor deadline.</li><li>• PI completes scientific components of the proposal and assists in budget/budget justification development.</li></ul>

# Governance

## Satisfaction Survey

A Satisfaction Survey will establish a baseline and assess relative end-user attitudes toward research administration service delivery for in-scope functions.

### Goals of Survey

- Measure utilization and satisfaction with local research administration functions
- Inform URA leadership and Governance Committee about attitudes towards the current relative levels of service provided in the Colleges, Schools, and Units
- Set baseline satisfaction metrics to help chart progress through implementation and maturation of new service delivery model

### Participants

- All active researchers, OVPR staff, and other central units

### Anticipated Timing

- Issued quarterly for first year, then issued annually
- Open for 2-3 weeks

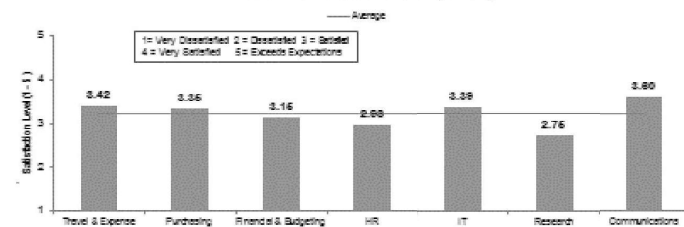
### Sample Service Delivery Satisfaction Survey Results

DRAFT

#### Results Overview – Overall Satisfaction Levels

- The average of 3.23 across all activities indicates that employees are slightly higher than "Satisfied."
- Communications and Travel & Expense have the highest current satisfaction levels, while Research and HR have the lowest current satisfaction levels.

Overall Satisfaction Levels\* (n=529)



\*321 surveys were completed by Facilities Services via a paper copy of the survey. These surveys only included information regarding department employee type, years at Carolina and satisfaction levels with IRT support activities.

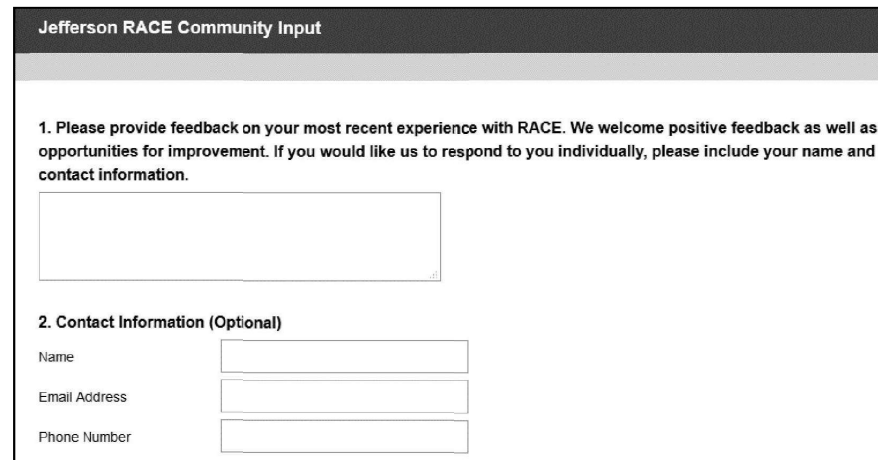
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# Governance

## Research Faculty/URA Staff Relationships

The implementation of community feedback tools, such as a survey link included in URA staff email signatures, provides leadership the ability to celebrate “wins” and create corrective action plans when customer service deviates from the SLA.



The form is titled "Jefferson RACE Community Input" and contains two main sections. The first section asks for feedback on the most recent experience with RACE, welcoming both positive feedback and suggestions for improvement, and requests the respondent's name and contact information if they wish to be contacted individually. This section includes a large text input area. The second section, titled "2. Contact Information (Optional)", contains three input fields for Name, Email Address, and Phone Number.

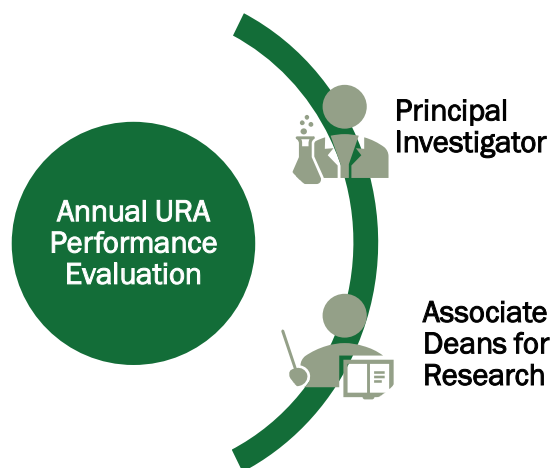
*Sample community feedback tool*

Community feedback results should be regularly shared with senior leadership and the Governance Committee

# Governance

## URA Performance Evaluations

The Assistant Vice Provost, URA reports to the Associate Vice Provost for Research, with a dotted matrix to the Associate Deans for Research for the units supported by the URA model. URA performance evaluations will be driven by the Assistant Vice Provost, URA, but will include significant input from the PIs and the Associate Deans for Research they support.



Provides feedback resulting from day-to-day interaction with assigned URA. Feedback may range from proposal development experiences to the timeliness and accuracy of financial reports received/reviewed

Responsible for providing holistic feedback of URA services for a particular college, school, or unit

Should performance issues arise at other times, the PI and/or Associate Deans for Research may contact the Assistant Vice Provost, URA. It is critical that performance issues are brought to the attention of URA leadership as soon as they become a concern.



# Governance

## Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

Metrics allow URA leadership, College/School/Unit leaders, and the Governance Committee to evaluate the performance of the unit. When defining performance metrics, the following questions should be considered.

Are the performance goals achievable?

- Metrics and their associated targets need to be realistic and attainable
- Processes supported by the URA model will be embedded in compliance, which may impact perceived service levels

Does Baylor have the capability to capture and apply these metrics?

- Metrics must be aligned with current technological capabilities and methodologies for capturing these metrics must be defined and agreed upon by URA leadership
- Certain metrics may be captured over time (e.g. proposal review trends) as Baylor enhances its research administration IT capabilities

Can these metrics show change against a baseline?

- A baseline should be established to understand the impact of the URA unit and identify opportunities for continuous process improvement. This is especially important for the first year of implementation and throughout the change management process

# Governance

## Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

Key performance indicators measure efficiency, effectiveness, and end-user satisfaction, each leading to different insights for process improvements; KPI's will be outlined in the SLA.

Metric Type	Area	Sample Performance Indicators
Service Level Measures	Pre-Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of proposals that do not require OSP to return them to the URAs for revisions prior to submission to sponsor</li> </ul>
Compliance Risk and Service Level Measures	Post-Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of advance accounts open greater than 90-days</li> <li>Number of accounts where the project period has ended and the account is in deficit (&gt; \$1,000) or where there is a surplus remaining (&gt; \$1,000)</li> <li>Percentage of accounts reviewed with a PI in a given month</li> <li>Number of financial reports that are submitted past the sponsor due date</li> <li>Number of awards that are open greater than 90-days after the award end date</li> <li>Number and dollar amount of cost transfers both greater than and less than 90-days prior to the current date</li> <li>Number of effort reports certified by institutional due date</li> </ul>
Service Level Measures	Faculty Service Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PI, Department/Finance Manager, and Central Office (e.g. OVPR and Controller's Office) satisfaction with URA support (annual survey)</li> <li>PI and Department/Finance Manager satisfaction survey distributed URA leadership monthly or quarterly for the first year of the URA implementation to ensure service levels are being met or exceeded</li> <li>PI and Department/Finance Manager transactional surveys available on the URA website and in the email signatures of URA team members – available to be completed at any time</li> </ul>



### **Appendix 3: Roles and Responsibilities Matrix**



Baylor - Future State R&R Inventory	Status	Department	VPR								All Other							
Role		PI	URAs	Research Adv	Pre-Award	Post-Award	Research Compliance	Data Analysis	Com and Ind Engage	Marketing and Comm	Controller's Office	General Counsel	Dev and Corp Rel's	Attending Veterinarian	Biosafety Officer	Research Integrity Office	Other	Notes
<b>Cash Management</b>																		
Conduct the LOC draw for all sponsored programs (except DOE)						P*					P*							
Conduct the LOC draw for Dept of Education (spon and non-sponsored)						P*												
Complete the federal quarterly cash reports						P*												
Manage/collect invoice payments for Accounts Receivable						P*							P*					Review Managed Foundations List
Manage banking/clearing for sponsored programs						P					S						P*	Cashier's Office, Confirm cash management approach
Reconcile banking/clearing for sponsored programs						P												Confirm cash management approach
Apply payments to AR balances in the financial system						P*												
Deposit checks from sponsors						P											P*	Cashier's Office, Confirm cash management approach
Outgoing Participant Payments						P											P*	Huron/Hai following up with Traci to confirm future state
Continuously monitor outstanding AR, especially aged receivable balances						P												
Inform PI, URA, Controller's Office, etc. of A/R at risk		I	I			P					I							
<b>Account Closeout</b>																		
Notify the department of account that is due for closeout						P												
Prepare final account reconciliation for award closeout			P			P												
Review final account reconciliation for accuracy and exclusion of unallowable expenses						P												
Prepare and submit allowable adjustments or cost transfers			P			P												
Review/approve allowable adjustments or cost transfers						P												
Prepare additional programmatic documentation for closeout (property/invention statements)		P			S	P												
Submit additional programmatic documentation for closeout (property/invention statements)		I			P	P												
Close the account in the financial system						P												
Return remaining funds / balance etc.						P							P*					Review Managed Foundations List
<b>Financial Compliance</b>																		
Monitor sponsored programs for overspending			S			P												
Prepare documentation and justification for cost transfers		S	P			P												
Review/approve cost transfer requests						P					P							
Review a sample of cost transfers to determine compliance						P												
Conduct periodic internal audits of direct charges / cost transfers						P												
Inform Controller's Office of any institutional financial risk, including potential write-offs						P					I							
<b>Subrecipient Monitoring</b>																		
Pre-qualify subrecipients with a review of single audit in the federal clearinghouse					P													
Identify subrecipients that pose a risk per audit findings					P													
Create requisition for subrecipient			P		P*													
Approve requisition for subrecipient																		
Approve sub invoices for payment (incoming)	P																	Evaluate approval process for sub reqs as part of ignite
Process sub invoices for payment (incoming)		P																
Ensure all sub invoice charges are entered appropriately		P				P												
Ensure sub invoices (including final) are received		P																
Address subrecipient questions regarding payment of invoices		P		P														
Ensure performance goals are achieved by subrecipient		P																
Report performance issues to central office immediately (VPR and Controller's)			P															
Request back-up documentation from subrecipient per subcontract			P															
Perform ad hoc audit of high-risk subrecipients																	P*	Internal Audit
Review corrective action plans for subrecipients	I	I		S													P*	Internal Audit
Internally communicate the results of subrecipient audit findings or corrective actions				I														
Maintain documentation of sub monitoring efforts			S		P													Internal Audit
<b>Effort Reporting</b>																		
Notify PI/Dept of upcoming Effort Certification						P												
Complete effort reporting requirements	P		S			P												
Track current and pending effort commitments						P												
Collect and maintain official records of effort reporting						P												
Adaptor compliance with effort reporting policy						P												
<b>Audit</b>																		
Correspond with external entity regarding audit											P							
Prepare Audit response											P							
Follow-up on corrective actions											P							
External agency review											P							
Interface for desk reviews						P					I		P*					Confirm criteria to inform Controller's Office, Review Managed Foundations List
Coordinates site visits with regulatory officials (DHHS, OIG, OHRP, FDA)							P											
<b>Commercialization and Industry Engagement</b>																		
Develop and/or assist with sponsored agreements with industry, non-sponsored agreements, and federal agency engagement									P									
Lab to Market Commercialization (Industry Engagement)									P									Clarify lab to market and other Commercialization roles
Review and report patent and IP activity									P		I*							Report to Controller's Office for revenue/asset management
Manage royalties and IP payments									P		P							To be re-evaluated when volume grows
Develop industry and business relationships									P*		P		P*					Clarify VPR/Corporate Relations Roles
<b>Research and Operational Budget</b>																		
Support the development of budgets for institutional operations								S									P*	Other - Budget Manager
Support the VP, Research Administration by providing the requested information for budget oversight								S									P*	Other - Budget Manager
Support reporting of research budgets against actual expenditures								P										
<b>Training, Compliance, and Communication</b>																		
Review existing policies and procedures to ensure they are current					P*	P*	P*		P*		S**		P*					* Team lead will be responsible for their functional area, **Single Audit related policies/procedures only
Develops/revises policies and procedures to ensure they are current					P*	P*	P*		P*		S**		P*					* Team lead will be responsible for their functional area, **Single Audit related policies/procedures only
Ensures staff compliance with policies and procedures			P*		P*	P*	P*		P*		S**		P*					* Team lead will be responsible for their functional area, **Single Audit related policies/procedures only
Develop and deliver training materials		S	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*				P*					* Team lead will be responsible for their functional area, **Single Audit related policies/procedures only
Disseminates compliance information/new regulations to the research community										P								
Prepare and distribute VPR communications										P								
Maintain VPR websites										P								
Partner with faculty on research related publications and news releases										P								
<b>Metrics</b>																		
Ensure data integrity for data that is pulled into metrics dashboard				P	P	P	P	P	P									
Prepare metrics				P	P	P	P	P	P									
Monitor metrics											I							
Research Survey Responses (HERD, BRT, KUT, etc.)								P										
Institutional Survey Responses w/ Research Component (i.e. Times Higher Ed)											P							
F&A Distribution Report								P										
Centers and Institutes reporting								P										
Lab productivity studies for faculty (BRIC, BSB)								P										
Review of internal programs, including ROI								P										
Proposal/award/expenditure metrics								P										
<b>Institutional Activities</b>																		
F&A Rate Negotiation											P							
Equipment Management																	P*	Other - Asset Management
Recharge Centers - Periodic Rate Setting Review											P							
Recharge Centers - Recharge Procedure																	P*	Other - Recharge Centers

Baylor - Future State R&R Inventory	Status	Department	VPR							All Other									
Role		PI	URAs	Research Adv	Pre-Award	Post-Award	Research Compliance	Data Analysis	Com and Ind Engage	Marketing and Comm	Controller's Office	General Counsel	Dev and Corp Rel'n	Attending Veterinarian	Biosafety Officer	Research Integrity Office	Other	Notes	
Systems Management																			
Manage sponsor system access (Fastlane, NIH Commons, etc.)			P		P														
Monitor PPM unprocessed transactions			P		S														
Manage unprocessed transactions that must be transferred			P																
Update Superdilem from date to allow for processing			P																
Match unprocessed transactions that were transferred			P		P														
Identifies and manages bug/enhancement requests			P*	P*	P*						P*							System will drive primary owner	
Works with IT vendor to prioritize requests			P*	P*	P*						P*							System will drive primary owner	
Works with IT vendor to implement bug fixes/enhancements			P*	P*	P*						P*							System will drive primary owner	
Updates training materials/guides			P*	P*	P*						P*							System will drive primary owner	
Communicates and trains the research community			P*	P*	P*						P*							System will drive primary owner	
Other Activities																			
Manages visiting scholars process																			
Using non-students via Biorequest			P*														P	Other - HR	
TSA - tuition stipend			P*															Confirm URA or other school support	
Process salary buy-outs			P*															Confirm URA or other school support	
Process summer salary			P*															Confirm URA or other school support	
Risk assessor process for foreign sponsors (e.g. India sponsor)					P	I					I	I						Varies by cost	
Procurement Functions (Pre-Ignite)																			
Research study team (PI, Post-Doc, etc.) identifies required research supplies/equipment and purchases via P-Card		P	I																
Conduct allowability review of research purchase in accordance with the Uniform Guidance Micro-Purchase Threshold (research purchases <\$10K)		I	I																
Conduct review of research purchases based on current institutional procurement policies (purchases >\$50K reviewed pre-ignite for bulk buy savings)		I	I														P	Central Procurement Team	
Conduct post-audit review of research-related purchases through monthly reconciliation processes		I	P																
Identify cost transfers or adjustments as identified through monthly reconciliation process and initiate correction		I	P			S													
Procurement Functions (Ignite)																			
Identify research supplies/equipment for purchase ("shops") via the procurement portal (catalog and non-catalog)		P	S																
Conduct review and approve or disapprove based on institutional procurement policies		I																P Procurement Lead (New role assigned within the system under Ignite)	
Submit approved requisitions																		P Procurement Lead (New role assigned within the system under Ignite)	
Conduct daily review of all submitted research requisitions based on future state institutional policies for research purchases (>\$50K catalog and <\$2.5K non-catalog)		I	P																
Approve or disapprove research requisitions based on allowability, allocability, and reasonableness, also considering available budget and award terms and conditions		I	P																
Conduct post-audit review of research-related purchases through monthly reconciliation processes		I	P																
Identify cost transfers or adjustments as identified through monthly reconciliation process and initiate correction		I	P			S													
Confirm requisitions have been approved, processed, and allocated appropriately			P																
HR Functions (Pre-Ignite)																			
Based on monthly PI meetings, identify need for HR changes (e.g. payroll allocations, Post-Doc hiring, etc.) and provide relevant support to inform decision to initiate request		S	P																
Review and approve required HR changes based on allowability, allocability, and reasonableness, also considering available budget and award terms and conditions, inform Financial Manager of required HR actions specific to research		I	P																
Submit HR requests via Biorequest		I	P															Financial Manager	
Conduct secondary review of HR requests and approve or disapprove			I															P Central HR Team	
Process HR changes in system			P															P Payroll Team	
Confirm HR changes have been approved and processed in the system			P															I Central HR Team	
HR Functions (Ignite)																			
Based on monthly PI meetings, identify need for HR changes (e.g. payroll allocations, Post-Doc hiring, etc.) and provide relevant support to inform decision to initiate request		S	P																
Review and approve required HR changes based on allowability, allocability, and reasonableness, also considering available budget and award terms and conditions, Route HR requests (e.g. payroll allocations, hiring requests, etc.) to HCM Specialist via email		I	P																
Complete HR data entry in Oracle Cloud HCM System			I															P HCM Specialist (New role assigned with the system under Ignite)	
Conduct review of HR requests and approve or disapprove			I															L, P HCM Specialist (New role assigned with the system under Ignite), Fiscal Officer	
Confirm HR changes have been approved and processed in the system			P															I HCM Specialist (New role assigned with the system under Ignite)	
Faculty Funds (Pre-Ignite)																			
Based on monthly PI meetings, review all account activity and identify need for use of faculty funds (e.g. F&A rev share, start-ups) when sponsored accounts are not appropriate		S	P																
Faculty Funds (Ignite)																			
Allocate faculty funds from unit to individual departments and PIs																		P Fiscal Officer (New role assigned with the system under Ignite)	
Active URA of faculty fund allocations from unit to individual departments and PIs, include faculty funds in PI financial reports			I															P Fiscal Officer (New role assigned with the system under Ignite)	
Based on monthly PI meetings, review all account activity and identify need for use of faculty funds (e.g. F&A rev share, start-ups) when sponsored accounts are not appropriate		S	P																

**Appendix 4: Service Level Agreement: Baylor University – University Research  
Administrators**

# SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT:

## BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

### UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ADMINISTRATORS (URA)

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College/School  
November 6, 2019

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### Acronyms List

1. **A/R:** Accounts Receivable
2. **ADR:** Associate Dean for Research
3. **AVPR URA:** Assistant Vice Provost for Research, University Research Administration
4. **COI:** Conflict of Interest
5. **eRA:** Electronic Research Administration
6. **F&A:** Facilities and Administrative
7. **PO:** Purchase Order
8. **FFR:** Federal Financial Report
9. **GL:** General Ledger
10. **HR:** Human Resources
11. **IACUC:** Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
12. **IDC:** Indirect Costs
13. **IRB:** Institutional Review Board
14. **JIT:** Just-in-Time
15. **NCE:** No Cost Extension
16. **NIH:** National Institutes of Health
17. **NOA:** Notice of Award
18. **NIH:** National Institutes of Health
19. **NSF:** National Science Foundation
20. **PI:** Principal Investigator
21. **PMS:** Payment Management System
22. **R&D:** Research and Development
23. **SLA:** Service Level Agreement
24. **URA:** University Research Administrator



## Section I – General Information and Objectives

### SLA Purpose and Expectation

The purpose of this Service Level Agreement (SLA) is to establish the foundation for a cooperative partnership between University Research Administrators (URA) and units it serves.

This SLA will outline:

- The services that URA offers and the working relationship between URAs and the units served.
- The key performance indicators used to measure the quality of service provided.

URAs will work closely with the units to meet their research administration needs. Communication, feedback, and accountability are critical to ensuring excellent customer service.

### URA Mission

Provide consistent and high-quality pre- and post-award administrative support to all Baylor research faculty.

### URA Vision

Serving as Baylor University's administrative facilitators of research.

### URA Guiding Principles

- Provide services designed to streamline, standardize, and facilitate grant acquisition and administration through a network of trained research administrators.
- Support Baylor's research vision to become an R1/Tier 1 institution by providing faculty an administrative partnership geared toward decision support and strategic thinking.
- Deliver standardized and consistent levels of service, regardless of the customer base.

### URA Goals

1. **Decrease the administrative burden** placed on Baylor research faculty.
2. Serve as a **trusted and reliable resource** for Baylor research faculty.
3. Ensure **provision of excellent customer service** to faculty, staff, and sponsors.
4. **Serve as a conduit for communication** between research faculty and central administrative offices.
5. **Translate research financial matters** in a manner that is comprehensible and beneficial to the advancement of research.
6. **Provide streamlined and standardized processes** that support researchers in an increasingly complex and competitive research environment.
7. Deliver **polished and professional** research administrative services with a focus on continuous improvement.
8. Enable **education, training, and professional development** for URA staff.

## **URA Structure**

Each Baylor unit will have a designated URA team member to provide both pre- and post-award research administration services. If a URA is out of the office for a planned or unplanned absence, a designated backup team member will be identified and available to meet all research administration needs.

The current list of URA staff, teams, and units served can be found on the Baylor University [URA website](#).

The Assistant Vice Provost for Research (AVPR), University Research Administrators reports to the Associate Vice Provost for Research, with a secondary reporting relationship to the Associate Dean for Research (ADR) for each unit served.

URA performance evaluations will be based on input from Principal Investigators (PI) and ADRs with whom the URA works closely. During annual performance evaluations, the AVPR URA will solicit PI and ADR feedback on the performance of the staff member serving the corresponding unit. Should performance issues arise at other times, the PI, Chair, or ADR may contact the AVPR URA. It is critical that performance issues are brought to the attention of supervisors as soon as they become a concern.

## **Section II – URA Service Components**

### **URA Locations**

The URA offices serving Baylor units are **in the Marrs McLean Science Building**. The expectation is that all URAs are completely mobile and able to meet PIs in their office or lab, should an in-person meeting be required. Drop-in visits to the respective URA offices are always welcome, however, PIs are encouraged to call or email to ensure their URA is in the office, as they may be with another PI.

### **Expectations for Response**

URA staff will respond to any request (whether submitted by a PI, Department Chair, or ADR) within **one business day**, with the understanding that when a PI and URA are actively working on a proposal, communication will be more frequent. If a URA staff member is out of the office on a planned or unplanned absence, their designated backup team member will address the request. For planned absences, URA team members will be required to notify their PIs of the individual who will be serving as their backup while they are absent. For unplanned absences, URA staff members will be required to leave contact information for their backup via their out-of-office message in Outlook.

While URA staff will constantly strive to meet expected service goals, please be aware of the following annual events that may impact processing time:

- Major proposal cycle submission deadlines (e.g. National Institutes of Health)
- Baylor fiscal year closing

### **URA Services**

URAs will work with Pre-Award, Post-Award, the units, and the PIs who will collaborate and collectively be responsible for the entire award life cycle. URA staff will also assist the PI by preparing any documentation required for review and approval by the Pre- and Post-Award Offices. High-level roles and responsibilities are outlined below. A detailed roles and responsibilities matrix is included in the Appendix.

University Research Administrators (URA) Responsibilities	
<b>Proposal Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure compliance with institutional and sponsor-specific policies</li> <li>Assist with the development of the administrative components of a proposal, including budget, budget justification, biosketches, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Proposal Submission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate the routing and submission process with the Pre-Award Office</li> <li>Serve as the primary liaison between PIs and the Pre-Award Office, ensure timeliness of submission, and communicate internal and external deadlines</li> </ul>
<b>Award Notification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate the communication of award terms and conditions, status of award review (if applicable), and other relevant updates to PIs</li> <li>Review awarded budget modifications, compliance documentation, Just-in-Time (JIT) requests, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Award Set Up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the award set up process in the financial system</li> <li>Review the established award in the financial system for accuracy and submit requests to the Pre- and Post-Award Offices, as needed</li> </ul>
<b>Subcontract Initiation and Monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the need for a subcontract</li> <li>Monitor active subcontracts to ensure programmatic progress and compliance</li> <li>Review subcontract invoices for accuracy and address questions regarding payment</li> <li>Submit requests to the Pre- and Post-Award Offices for project changes, prior approvals, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Award Modifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit requests for award extensions, revisions, etc. to the Pre- and Post-Award Offices</li> <li>Serve as the primary liaison between PIs and the Pre- and Post-Award Offices to ensure timeliness of submission for all relevant documentation and communicate deadlines</li> </ul>
<b>Cost Share</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advise PIs and the Post-Award Office of cost share commitments and potential risks</li> <li>Monitor and track all cost share commitments through the life of the award to ensure commitments are met</li> </ul>
<b>Cost Transfers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and submit cost transfer requests and documentation in coordination with PIs</li> <li>Ensure cost transfers have been correctly processed and follow up with the Post-Award Office as needed</li> </ul>
<b>Procurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Pre-Ignite:</b> Conduct limited post-audit review of research purchases as a part of monthly reconciliation processes to ensure expenses are allowable and allocable</li> <li><b>Ignite (tentative):</b> Including the responsibilities above, conduct up front allowability review (via Ignite) of research purchases &gt;\$5k for catalog purchases and &gt;\$2.5K for non-catalog purchases when initiated</li> </ul>
<b>HR Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Pre-Ignite:</b> Review and approve proposed payroll allocations for available budget and allowability</li> <li><b>Ignite (tentative):</b> Inform HCM Specialists of payroll allocation changes via email. HCM Specialists will be accountable for processing allocation changes in a timely manner (i.e. before monthly payroll deadlines), per a to-be-defined service level agreement</li> </ul>
<b>Award Balance Monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generate and review monthly financial reports of all sponsored activities with PIs</li> <li>Monitor award budgets to expenses and advise PIs accordingly (e.g. burn rate, budget/expense forecasting, etc.)</li> <li>Review grant financials prior to the submission of sponsor-required financial reports</li> </ul>
<b>Effort Reporting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate effort policies to PIs and research staff, including impact of variances (e.g. &gt;25% effort changes), if they occur</li> </ul>

University Research Administrators (URA) Responsibilities	
<b>Award Closeout</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with PIs to distribute and track the effort reporting and certification process</li> <li>Notify PIs of outstanding residuals and/or deficits and coordinate the closeout process with the Post-Award Office</li> <li>Ensure all appropriate expenditures and cost transfers are posted before internal closeout deadlines (e.g. 60-days after an award end date)</li> </ul>
<b>Faculty Funds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Pre-Ignite:</b> Provide guidance to PIs regarding the use of designated funds (for payroll and non-payroll expenses) when sponsored accounts are not appropriate</li> <li><b>Ignite (tentative):</b> Including the responsibilities above, the Fiscal Officer will inform URAs of faculty funds as they are allocated from the central budgeting unit, URAs to provide guidance to PIs accordingly</li> </ul>

### Section III – URA Performance Metrics

#### Tracking Effectiveness

Timely, efficient, and accurate service and accountability are critical components of the URA office. To ensure that URA meets these goals, the office will track key performance indicators (KPI).

The KPIs will be monitored by URA leadership on a monthly basis with an official assessment occurring on an annual basis. These will also be published on the [URA website](#).

The URA office will also conduct an annual faculty satisfaction survey. Survey results will be used to identify areas where URA is meeting or exceeding expectations, or where attention may be needed to improve service.

#### Key Performance Indicators

##### Pre-Award

###### Service Level Measures

Percentage of proposals that do not require Pre-Award to return them to URA for revisions prior to submission to sponsor

##### Post-Award

###### Service Level Measures

Number of advance accounts open greater than 90-days

Number of accounts where the project period has ended, and the account is in deficit (> \$1,000) or where there is a surplus remaining (> \$1,000)

Percentage of accounts reviewed with a PI in a given month

Number of financial reports that are submitted past the sponsor due date

Number of awards that are open, but the project has ended, greater than 90-days prior to current date

Number and dollar amount of cost transfers both greater than and less than 90-days prior to current date

Number of effort reports certified by institutional due date

## Faculty Service-Related Metrics

Service Level Measure
PI and ADR satisfaction with URA support (annual survey)
PI and ADR satisfaction survey distributed by URA leadership monthly for the first year of the URA implementation to ensure service levels are being met or exceeded
PI and ADR transactional surveys available on the URA website and in the email signatures of URA team members (available for completion any time)

## Escalation Procedures: Failure to Meet Performance Expectations

If a URA fails to meet the expectations outlined in this document, a PI, Chair, or ADR can take the following steps:

1. **Communicate the problem directly to your URA team member**
  - a. Strong communication is key to the success of the partnership between the URA office and units served. If a problem arises, the first step is to identify the issue specifically and discuss possible resolutions with the URA team member. Depending on the need, this may be addressed through an in-person meeting, phone call, or email to URA team member.
2. **Contact URA leadership**
  - a. If discussions with the URA team member fail to resolve the problem or if the issue becomes pervasive, the PI should contact the AVPR, URA.
3. **Contact OVPR leadership**
  - a. If discussions with URA leadership fail to resolve the problem, the PI should contact the Associate Vice Provost for Research to discuss the issue and identify a resolution.

## Section IV – SLA Maintenance

### Conditions Requiring Maintenance

The SLA should accurately reflect the services provided by URA staff to the units served. As processes and policies evolve, changes to services and service levels may be required. Updates and changes to the SLA can be identified, presented, and confirmed through the processes described below.

### Periodic Review of SLA

The Associate Vice Provost for Research, AVPR, URA, and URA Governance Committee will meet annually to review the SLA to determine whether the services and service level commitment are meeting the needs of the units served. During the early stages of URA implementation, more frequent review (as often as quarterly) may be necessary to ensure that the SLA accurately reflects the PI and units needs, as well as the capacity of the URA team to meet them.

Substantial changes to research activity, such as a significant increase in sponsored research, should also prompt a review of the SLA.

### Ad Hoc Maintenance Requests

The Associate Vice Provost for Research; AVPR, URA; URA Governance Committee, and ADRs can propose changes to the SLA outside of the regular review process. This review process is outlined below.

### **SLA Modification Review**

The SLA will be reviewed for proposed changes/revisions and to identify any possible changes to URA staffing volume. Reviewers include the Vice Provost for Research, Associate Vice Provost for Research, AVPRs, URA, URA Governance Committee, ADRs, as well as other central administration offices (e.g., Controller's Office, Human Resources, Fiscal Officers, etc.).

The stakeholders above may submit requested updates and recommendations, with a brief rationale for each recommendation. At the direction of the review committee, the AVPR, URA will make all approved changes to the SLA document. The SLA will be posted on the [URA website](#) to promote accountability. The Associate Vice Provost for Research and the AVPR, URA will be responsible for implementing changes to the SLA and communicating updates the research community.

## **URA Partnership Agreement**

### *Overview*

This document is an agreement between the URA unit and the signatory of the college/school/unit listed below. The purpose of this document is to create a shared understanding of the defined responsibilities regarding support for local research administration needs.

Under the leadership of the AVPR, URA, this agreement establishes the parameters under which the unit will provide responsive, proactive, and high-quality services to Baylor PIs. Roles are organized to deliver services in a professional manner, providing both subject matter expertise and compliance to relevant policies and procedures.

### *Commitments and Expectations*

Staff managed by the AVPR, URA will work closely with the PI and provide a high level of service in a timely manner, as outlined in the URA Service Level Agreement. The PI will work collaboratively with dedicated staff and respond to requests in a timely manner.

When expectations of the PI or the URA unit are not met, the PI or the URA should bring this to the attention of the AVPR, URA. If necessary, the AVPR, URA and/or the PI can escalate the issue to the Associate Vice Provost for Research. All parties will endeavor to resolve the issue fairly, however, should the issue be unresolvable, staffing for the signatory unit below may be reevaluated.

### *Affirmation of Agreement*

*I agree to this agreement including the roles and service expectations outlined herein:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name – Unit Receiving Service

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name – AVPR, URA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature – Unit Receiving Service

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature – AVPR, URA

## **Appendix 5: Biography**

Delilah Flores-Rivera received her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from the University of Tampa. She received her Master of Business Administration in Healthcare Management from the University of Phoenix. Delilah joined the Baylor team in January 2019. Her duties include providing leadership, strategic planning, and organizational direction to the University Research Administrators (URA) and Office of the Vice Provost for Research (OVPR). Previous to her current role, she had a 15-year career at Moffitt Cancer Center, where started her work in research administration in 2007 and served as a Senior Research Financial Analyst for the Division of Basic Sciences.